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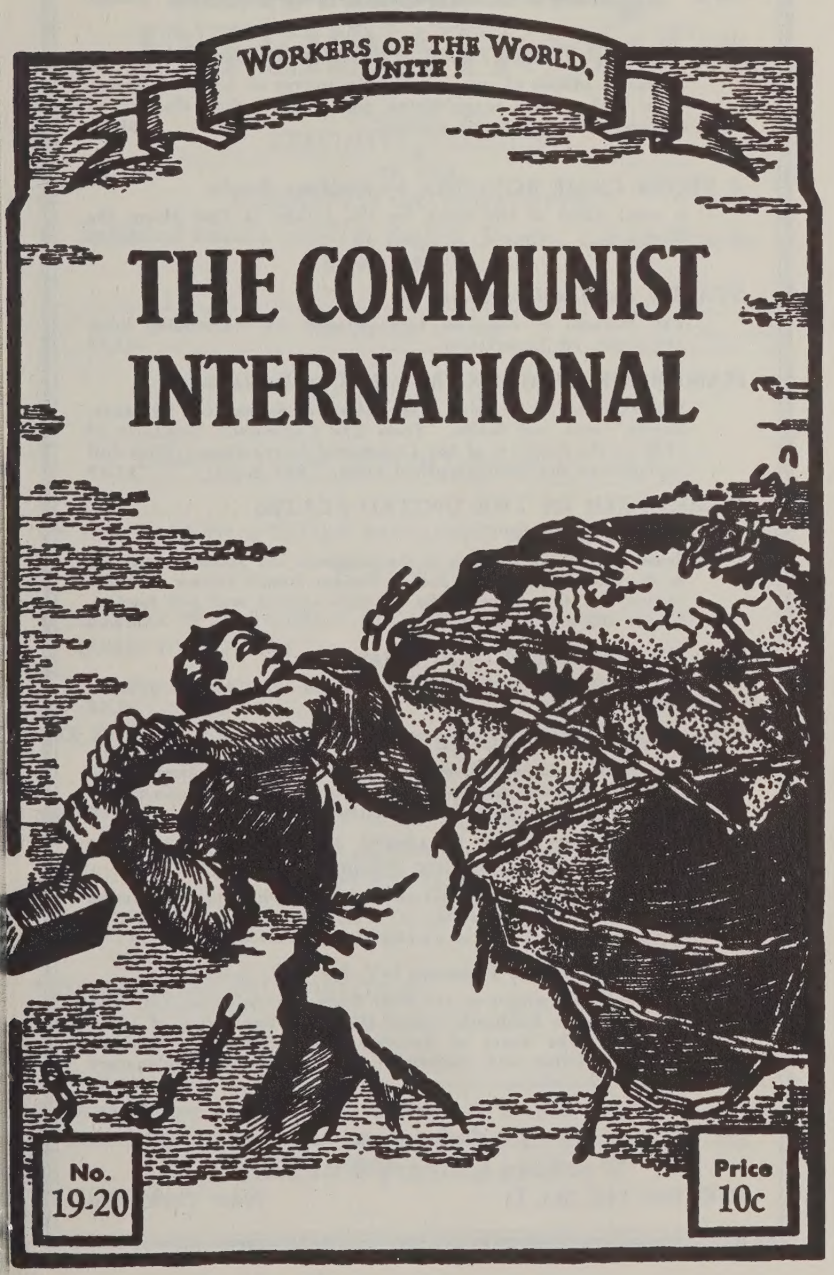

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Vol. XII | OCTOBER 5, 1935 | Nos. 19-20

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On the Road to a United Revolutionary Party*

By N. KOPLENIG

THE proposition advanced in the thesis of Comrade Dimitroff to the effect that ". . . the *political crisis*, expressed in the armed struggle of the workers in Austria and Spain against the fascists, a struggle which has not yet led to the victory of the proletariat over fascism, but which prevented the bourgeoisie from consolidating its fascist dictatorship", provides the Communist Party of Austria with the possibility of once again analyzing the entire post-February period, and of defining in a most exact fashion its strategical positions, and the tasks facing it in the struggle against fascism.

The great class battle which took place in February, 1934, the armed struggle in the period between February 12 and 14 fundamentally changed the face of Austria, and of the Austrian working class.

February, 1934, was to have been a case of Austrian fascism settling accounts with the workers! February was to have led to the destruction of the class organizations of the proletariat. At the same time, it was to discharge the growing tension in the imperialist struggle by the victory of Heimwehr fascism, *i.e.*, in favor of Italy.

The February battles ended in the military defeat of the fighting workers, who were left to their fate by Social-Democracy, and at the same time were deprived of the leadership of the Communist Party. But fascism did not succeed in achieving its main aim of really crushing the working class movement. In spite of its military victory, fascism proved to be unable to crush the class power of the Austrian proletariat.

The February battles were an indication of the political crisis in Austria. With the defeat of the Schutzbund, and of the workers who undertook the struggle, the elements of the political crisis were not overcome, but, on the contrary, were intensified. Austria and its fascist system are at the present time in a condition of political crisis.

What constitute the elements of the political crisis in Austria?

Its most important element is the growing and determined resistance to fascism by the decisive sections of the proletariat, which has not allowed the fascist system to become stabilized. This fact also determines the great international importance of the February battles in Austria. The February battles have created a breach in the minds of the workers as to their ideas of the impossibility of conquering fascism, as cultivated by the reformists.

The developments in Austria after February are an international example of how fascism has not been in a position to win the working class, which rose up against it in armed battle. The successful resistance of the working class to the fascist attempts at "unification" in Austria

* Speech delivered at the Seventh Congress of the C.I., August 8, 1935.

bear witness, in addition, to the fact that the efforts of the fascist system to crush the working class remain unsuccessful even after the bloody victory over the workers.

One of the peculiar conditions under which the battle of the Austrian proletariat is taking place against fascism is the close interconnection between the internal and external political problems, by which the outward forms and the tactics of Austrian fascism are determined. The struggle of the imperialist states around Austria, especially the struggle between fascist Italy and fascist Germany, is the dominating point in the struggle of Austrian fascism against the proletariat, and for influence over the proletariat.

This contradiction between the imperialist states in the struggle for Austria has split the Austrian bourgeoisie into two camps, and thereby weakened Austrian fascism. This split also constitutes an element of the political crisis which is preventing fascism from overcoming the February crisis. In spite of the strengthening at times of the tendencies towards reconciliation between the two camps, by means of a compromise between Austria and Germany, fascism has not succeeded in smoothing over these contradictions. The split has remained. In Austria there is no united fascist front. On the contrary, the relations between the two fascist camps may at any moment lead to a crisis, to an open conflict.

Economic weakness and the split in the ranks of the fascists have narrowed down to a very great degree the mass basis of the dominating system.

The efforts of fascism to win the working class have already failed due to the fact that it was compelled, after February, to undertake an open offensive on the social rights of the working class. The split in the ranks of fascism has at the same time split into two camps those ranks of the petty bourgeoisie and peasantry who are still under the influence of fascism, and first and foremost has prevented the petty bourgeoisie from being consolidated into a mass fascist movement. At the same time it has prevented the establishment of a single fascist party in Austria.

German fascism has made use of the weakness of Austrian fascism after the February events in order to arrange the putsch on July 25. It is precisely the events of July 25 which made clear the differences in the camp of the Austrian bourgeoisie, and those strong positions which National-Socialism possessed and still possesses in the camp of Austrian fascism, and which have not as yet been liquidated, which all confirm the considerable internal weakness of the Austrian fascist system.

The organizers of the events of July 25 counted on the support of the Austrian workers. The events of July 25 brought them defeat, since the workers did not render them any support. Hence it follows that in Austria not a single imperialist state or fascist grouping can finally and for a long period drive out or even conquer another group, if it does not succeed in winning the support of the decisive sections of the proletariat.

The working class movement in Austria has for the time being prevented the victory of Mussolini. Hitler's combination of July 25

fell through. The working class has since then always been the anti-fascist force which is preventing the imperialist states from realizing these combinations. It is precisely due to the fact that fascism has had no successes with the workers that the imperialist struggle for Austria, while it takes the form of an attempt to achieve internal unification, remains open and unsolved. In the same way the contradiction between the fascist camps remains unsolved. This prevents the fascist system in Austria from becoming consolidated and stabilized, and becomes the starting point for the further permanent development of all the elements of the political crisis.

But there are still other points which condition the special weakness of the fascist regime in Austria. One of the most unfavorable points as far as Austrian fascism is concerned is the special weakness of its economic system, which has led to the development of unemployment on a colossal scale. The fascist system is unable to bring about a change in this sphere. Fascism has been unable to introduce any fundamental improvements in this situation; its economic weakness has narrowed and is now still narrowing down the possibility of its developing social demagogy on a more successful scale.

In the conditions of the passage to the special kind of depression in Austria, certain improvements in the economic situation, and a more or less powerful livening up of exports, an increase in production in a whole number of branches of production, especially in those connected with the war industry, as a result of the arming of Austria itself and of the growing of war orders from Japan, Italy and primarily Germany, have been observed. But the general picture of the economy of Austria has not been considerably altered in connection with these phenomena. Unemployment has decreased in an insignificant degree, while the symptoms of economic improvement have not been of an even character, whereas new flaws are to be noted in the recent period in the economic life of Austria.

Added to this is the circumstance that the split in the ranks of fascism is also reflected in leading economic circles. Further, note should be taken of the sabotage undertaken by a considerable section of the Association of Manufacturers, who have National-Socialist leanings, and of the resistance by heavy industry, which is under the influence of German capital, and which has still not been broken.

All this intensifies the economic difficulties facing fascism.

Every insignificant improvement in Austria's exports is in the closest degree connected with the imperialist contradictions.

The growing economic contradictions in Italy, which have sharpened in connection with the preparation for war, have also weakened the hopes of Austrian fascism of economic collaboration with Italy. Thus, the economic system of Austrian fascism is still pining away, as though stricken by a fatal disease, without having any chances of achieving a decisive change. And it is clear that a system suffering from such internal weakness does not at all possess a power of attracting sections of the population which are far away from it. The profound lack of faith in it of wide sections of the toilers is based on an understanding of the fact that fascism can and will give them nothing, but on the

contrary will deprive them of much which still remains after the fascist offensive.

From the very outset Austrian fascism declared that its task was to sweep away the revolutionary rubbish, under which term it understood the need to do away with all social conquests. The ideology of Austrian fascism, on the one hand, is based on the necessity of giving a foundation to the independence of the Austrian state, and on the other hand sets itself the task of establishing a fascist system of a monarchist clerical type. But, in the eyes of the wide masses of the people, monarchist propaganda clearly bears the brand of reaction and regression. In the measure in which Austrian fascism openly announces its monarchist aims, and is preparing the return of the Hapsburgs, it risks driving into the arms of National-Socialism those sections of the people which are wavering between National-Socialism and Austrian fascism. Hitherto Austrian fascism has not succeeded in winning the support of more or less wide sections of the population for the monarchy, although the monarchists carry on propaganda in favor of a constitutional democratic monarchy which will allegedly not subject the working class movement to any difficulties.

The difficulties being suffered by Austrian fascism intensify and sharpen the struggle of the cliques in the camp of the government. The Heimwehr and clerical forces within Austrian fascism, which have joined ranks so as to carry on a joint struggle against National-Socialism, are at the same time engaged in a struggle for leadership in their own camp.

An effort was made, through the organization of the "Fatherland Front", to unite both these wings on one program. In the recent period, the competitive struggle between these two groupings has led to a clear consolidation of the position of the Heimwehr. As regards introduction of general military conscription, and the question connected with it of the future relations between the military organizations and the army established on the basis of conscription, as regards the question of winning the masses of the youth by establishing a state young people's organization, and primarily in the question of the attitude to the masses of the workers, sharp disagreements reign as heretofore in the governmental camp in all these questions.

The line of demarcation between the Heimwehr organizations and National-Socialism is, in many cases, not especially sharp, and this intensifies the contradictions between them and the former Christian Socialists. The attack made by the Heimwehr on the Christian Youth Leagues, on the Christian trade unions and the mass organizations, frequently bear the character of a fascist campaign against the Catholics after the German fashion. In the future, this can lead to a still further intensification of the contradictions, in which the proletarian and laboring elements of the Christian organization will play an important role.

For the time being the clerical wing of Austrian fascism covers up these mass organizations by organizing them in the "Catholische Aktion" an organization which is under the protection of the Concordat with the Vatican.

In connection with this situation, wide possibilities open up for

the social demagogy of Austrian National-Socialism, and the latter very cleverly makes use of them. Austrian National-Socialism especially knows how to use for its own ends the ruin of the petty bourgeoisie and of the peasantry, their dissatisfaction with the government, and the existence of anti-Semitic sentiments among these sections of the population, and thanks to this it has succeeded in obtaining considerable influence precisely among these sections of the population.

National-Socialism bases its agitation in favor of the Anschluss not only on national grounds, but also on economic grounds. It is engaging in propaganda with some success, especially among the peasants, of the idea that the Anschluss is a way for Austria out of its economic crisis.

How is it that this weak fascist system which is without a doubt supported by only a minority of the population and which is faced by the working class, and behind the back of which the National-Socialists are operating as a hostile force, has been able to maintain itself so long? The following points have played a decisive role in this connection:

1. Austrian fascism has cunningly succeeded in making capital out of the imperialist contradictions in Central Europe, basing itself not only on Italian bayonets, but also ensuring itself the support of France and England and the benevolent neutrality of the Little Entente;

2. The anti-fascist front in Austria has not yet been widely developed and has not yet touched the toiling peasants and the middle sections of the population; the split in the ranks of the working class has not yet been outlived;

3. It has not yet succeeded in developing and organizing on a wide basis the struggle of the working class against the economic offensive of fascism.

4. The proletarian united front still does not possess a power of attraction as far as concerns the dissatisfied masses of the petty-bourgeois middle sections of the population, and the toiling peasants.

* * *

What line has the process of development taken within the Austrian working class after the February battles, and what role has the Communist Party played?

A characteristic feature of the position in Austria after February, 1934, is the struggle to win the Social-Democratic workers carried through by fascism with the aid of the knout and the sweet-cake, with the aid of terror and Christian phraseology. Within the bounds of this struggle for the workers, the class struggle has continued in conditions of increasing fascist dictatorship, and it is on this basis that the proletarian anti-fascist united front has come into being after February.

In its efforts to win the workers, Austrian fascism is fundamentally distinct from Hitler fascism. Austrian fascism has attempted first and foremost to make use of the traditions of the working class movement for its own ends, and to direct the disillusionment of the broad masses, called forth by the collapse of Social-Democracy, into fascist channels.

Such an effort to make use of reformist traditions was, for instance, the effort made by the Vice-Burgomeister of Vienna, Winter. This was an attempt to establish "an independent working class movement"

within the bounds of the fascist system. In this connection Winter made his starting point the old "constructive" and protective traditions of Austrian Social-Democracy. In April, 1934, he himself expressed the nature of his mission, as handed to him by Dollfuss, as follows:

> "I want to be the guardian of the post-war working class movement in Austria, so as to save all that which the working class movement of Austria has planned and striven over three generations."

This attempt suffered complete defeat. The workers succeeded in making use of this "Winter" organization so as to carry on their revolutionary work. Under the pressure of the workers, Winter was compelled to step over the bounds which he himself had set. He advanced demands which were inacceptable to the Heimwehr, and finally the government saw itself compelled to disband this organization. In the same way the attempt with the aid of the reformist turncoats to force the free trade unions and the other mass organizations into the new fascist organization established by the state, into the so-called "united" trade union, fell through as a result of the decisive resistance of the workers. Even in those places where it was possible later with the aid of pressure exerted by the employers to drive a section of the workers into the fascist state organizations, fascism has still this day not succeeded in winning these workers ideologically.

The degree to which the "united" fascist trade union even is a hopeless weapon at the present time in the hands of the government is shown by one of the latest speeches delivered by Starhemberg, where he stated that the "united" trade unions must also be liquidated. The fact that the fascist system has proven to be such a useless weapon in the struggle for the workers is one of the causes of the sharpening of the contradictions in the fascist camp, between the Heimwehr wing on the one hand, which, after becoming convinced that such efforts are doomed to be without results, is demanding their "totalization", and, on the other hand, a section of the Christian Social Party which is again and again seeking for ways of arriving at an agreement with the reformists.

Reformism was dealt a heavy blow in Austria, in the February days. Now it possesses no stable organization. Its ideology of class collaboration is now being rejected by the wide masses of workers. Nonetheless, it would be a mistake to think that reformism has no longer any influence in Austria. The traditions of the old Social-Democratic Party, personal contacts, etc., continue now as well to exert their influence over the masses. First and foremost the urge for legal activity is one of the reasons why the workers still place their hopes on reformism today, which on its side knows how to rouse illusions to the effect that it is allegedly possible to liquidate the dictatorship by peaceful means, to the effect that it is allegedly possible to arrive at an agreement with the bourgeoisie.

Considerable sections of the former Social-Democratic workers, primarily the older generation of workers, are waiting for the further development of events. An inconsiderable section has joined the "Revolutionary Socialists" organization which has arisen from the old Social-Democracy.

The "Revolutionary Socialists" stand for the united front and recognize the dictatorship of the proletariat. They reject the reformist efforts at agreement with fascism, but they have not yet broken with the Second International. Organizationally they are weak, but their ideological influence spreads far beyond the bounds of their organization. In their activity, they are chiefly limited to propaganda and agitation, reflecting all the unclarity which there exists among the socialistically inclined workers.

National-Socialism has also exerted great efforts so as to win the workers. Immediately after February, the Nazis succeeded in confusing a section of the working class, but after the July putsch the influence of the Nazis declined. However, National-Socialism in Austria still continues to remain an exceedingly serious danger. That which black and green fascism has not succeeded in doing, namely, penetrating into the ranks of the workers, National-Socialism could have done with great success thanks to its national and social demagogy, had our Party, if only for one moment, left this danger out of sight.

* * *

What experience has our Party attained in the struggle to bring about the proletarian united front and to win the Social-Democratic workers?

Our Party has in this respect undoubtedly achieved considerable success. Our Party has become transformed from a small Party into a large one *possessing mass influence at the present time.* Thanks to our united front policy we have succeeded in re-establishing the most important mass organizations, namely, the Schutzbund and the free trade unions, on the basis of the revolutionary class struggle. We have succeeded in establishing unity in the most important trade unions.

And the most decisive political result of the united front in Austria is the fact that the united front has rendered it impossible for fascism to establish a more or less wide mass basis within the working class, and to consolidate its dictatorship.

The preconditions for bringing about the united front with the Social-Democratic workers on a wide scale, and for the growth of our Party, were established by the experience of the February battles. It was possible for Austrian Social-Democracy to sow illusions over a long period of time with greater success than anywhere else to the effect that another way exists of preventing fascism from coming into being and of bringing about socialism than the path indicated by the Communist Party. The experience which the workers themselves derived from the February battles was the cause of a sharp change in their attitude towards Communism. But this change took place not of itself and not without the interference of the Party. On the contrary, such a course of development has depended in a decisive degree on the Party itself, on its policy, its tactics and practical work.

The Party would not have been able after February to gather a considerable section of the Social-Democratic workers under its banner had the Communists prior to February, and primarily in the decisive days of February, not joined the fighting front against fascism, and had it not stood shoulder to shoulder with the Schutzbunders on this

front. The Communists showed the way for a victorious struggle, which wide sections of the Social-Democratic workers have recognized to be correct after the experience of the February days. In those places where the Communists isolated themselves in a sectarian fashion in the February days, and there were such individual cases, it has needed much time so as to disperse the distrust of workers in the Party.

After February the Communist Party has become the only consistent defender of the workers' organizations, free trade unions and the Schutzbund, which fascism tried to crush. The belief of the Austrian working class in their own power depended first and foremost on the power of their organizations. Prior to February the Communists were expelled from these organizations, if they were so bold as to criticize the leaders. But when a considerable section of the Social-Democratic leaders left these organizations to their fate, while a section of these leaders fled to the camp of fascism, the Communist Party undertook the initiative of defending the organizations of the working class. In this regard it based itself on the will and initiative of the lower and middle functionaries and wide sections of the members, who did not wish to allow their organizations to be smashed. A great obstacle at this moment proved to be the sectarian tendencies which we had to overcome in our own ranks. There was a tendency to build the Schutzbund not as an independent organization, but, immediately after winning the support of the Schutzbunders, to urge them to join our Party.

We also had to resist the repeated efforts of the "Revolutionary Socialists" to split and liquidate the Schutzbund organization.

Tendencies also existed not to restore the old free trade unions, but to establish new unions with titles which sounded as revolutionary as possible.

The "Revolutionary Socialists" also declared after February that the free trade unions could only be re-established after the overthrow of the fascist government.

It needed much time for us to overcome these liquidatory tendencies, which resulted in a considerable loss of time. As against the efforts of the government to win the workers to the side of the fascist organizations, our Party supported the slogan which came from the masses themselves for the boycott of these organizations. Our Party stood at the head of this boycott movement.

But later, when the fascists and employers succeeded nonetheless in driving a considerable section of the factory workers into the "united" trade union, we began to organize work inside the fascist trade unions. The work which the Communists carried on, in a united front with the Social-Democratic workers, in defense of, and to re-establish the workers' organizations, and to establish resistance to the fascist organizations, prevented fascism from making use of the organization traditions of the working class movement for its own ends. This resistance organized by our Party, and our Party based itself on the widest initiative of the masses of the workers, and its struggle in defense of the workers' organizations, played a decisive role in enabling our Party to win the confidence of wide sections of Social-Democratic workers. By this means the argument advanced by the reformists to the effect that the Com-

munists are allegedly splitting the working class movement has been refuted once and for all.

What is more, the Communist Party has become the banner bearer of proletarian unity. After February it has become the embodiment of the will of the workers to overcome all kind of splits, and to overcome the split in and to re-establish the unity of the working class movement on a higher level, and on a revolutionary basis.

Further, the Communist Party took account of the sentiments of the Social-Democratic workers, who over a period of many years were firmly convinced of the correctness of the policy of their party, of the correctness of the path they had followed hitherto, and who are now undergoing considerable disillusionment. These workers fought as Social-Democrats, although they have unconsciously long ceased to be Social-Democrats. Without making any concessions in respect to the criticism of Social-Democratic policy, we established among the Social-Democratic workers and officials a certain succession between their past and their transfer to the Communist Party. We seized hold of the best fighting and organizational traditions of the Austrian working class movement, and developed the certainty among the workers that these fighting traditions would find their continuation in the ranks of the Communist Party. Thus we succeeded in rousing the initiative of many hundreds of Social-Democratic workers and entire groups, and although they were still not Communists, drawing them into the struggle for the further existence of the workers' organizations, into the struggle against fascism. This time we have learned to speak to the Social-Democratic workers in their own plain working class language, and by this means have rendered it easy for them to find their way into the Communist Party.

In his report, Comrade Dimitroff spoke about non-Party Bolsheviks. There are a considerable number of such non-Party Bolsheviks in Austria at the present time, and it is they who have assisted in the successes of our Party in bringing about the united front. To this category there belong first and foremost the Schutzbunders, who in the February days became convinced of the necessity of taking the Bolshevik road so as to fulfil their aims. (*Applause.*)

A special role in the development of the united front has been played in Austria by the question of trade union unity. Our experience is that the question of trade union unity cannot be separated from the general policy of the united front. All our proposals regarding the united front which we made from time to time again, in an effort to arrive at an agreement, remained without results for a long time. But when, on the anniversary of the February battles, the united front between the Communist Party, "Revolutionary Socialists", and the Schutzbunders, proved to be in a position to organize demonstrations and short term strikes in numerous factories, this exerted a decisive influence over the further development of trade union unity.

The "commission of seven" set up by the Amsterdam International of Trade Unions, and which considered itself the accredited representative of the trade unions after the February battles, refused to participate in this united front action. By this means it still further isolated itself

from the masses. This in the last analysis compelled even it to declare its readiness to establish trade union unity with the Central Commission for the re-establishment of the free trade unions set up on our initiative.

Some comrades are afraid that when uniting the trade unions we made too great concessions to the Amsterdamites. I think that these fears are unfounded. We approach the question of trade union unity not as an arithmetical example, but from the point of view as to whether trade union unity would help us to extend the mass basis of the illegal trade unions, and as to whether trade union unity would assist in bringing about a new advance of the entire movement, and in increasing the struggle of the workers against fascism.

One of the biggest weaknesses of our Party and of the united front at the present time consists in the fact that up till now we have been able only to an insignificant degree to organize the struggle in the factories for the day-to-day demands of the workers and against the offensive of fascism. Therefore, at the present time we consider it to be our most important task to transform the free trade unions into real centers of struggle in the enterprises for the day-to-day interests of the workers. Only in this way will we be in a position to extend the mass basis of the trade unions, and if we succeed, and this will depend first and foremost on the Communists working in the trade unions, then we shall have no need to fear that reformist influence will take hold in the trade unions.

But the realization of the unity of the free trade unions raises another very serious problem before us, the problem of work in the fascist "unified" trade unions. The "unified" trade unions are one of the weak points in the so-called working class policy of Austrian fascism. The latter, however, has nonetheless succeeded, according to statistics, in drawing 250,000 workers into the fascist trade unions. But this does not mean that these workers have been won by Austrian fascism ideologically. It is perfectly clear that we must work in these trade unions, and that we can work in them successfully.

In this connection, the question arises as to whether we should be satisfied with merely making use of these trade unions so as, in the last analysis, to disintegrate and disrupt them. I think that this is not enough. We must demand that the principle of the election of officials should be operated in these organizations, and also that the dependence of the "unified" trade unions on the government and the employers should be done away with. I think that such a possibility exists in the concrete conditions in Austria. We must make these trade unions useless as far as fascism is concerned, and if we carry on correct work we shall even succeed in bringing about a situation where the lower organizations of the "united" trade unions become transformed into an instrument in the hands of the workers against fascism.

A decisive and most important question of the united front in Austria is that of the attitude towards the "Revolutionary Socialists". The peculiar features of the post-February situation led to the question of unity of action being from the very beginning linked up in the closest degree with the question of organizational unity. The "Revolutionary Socialists" recognize the need for the united front, but in practice, in carrying through the united front, hesitancy shows itself

among their leaders, partly under the influence of the reformist elements, and partly under the influence of Trotskyist elements. Tendencies which existed among a section of the "Revolutionary Socialists" against the united front were, by February, 1935, done away with to a considerable degree. Comradely cooperation was to be observed not only in the lower organization, but also in the leading united front bodies.

This position changed after February, 1935, when the leaders of the "Revolutionary Socialists" developed a campaign against the unification of the Schutzbund, against the Communist International and the Soviet Union. The "Revolutionary Socialists" by this turn inflicted damage not only on the movement as a whole but also on themselves.

We do not know all the causes which conditioned this behavior, but we consider that the following causes exerted decisive influence on them. They were afraid that as far as we were concerned, the united front was only an excuse so as to deprive them of their Party members, they were afraid that we wanted to swallow them up. But they had the possibility of convincing themselves of the contrary.

The last plenum of our Central Committee was quite justified in pointing out that the "Revolutionary Socialists" achieved their biggest successes precisely when they strengthened the united front with the Communists, and they suffered defeat when they weakened the united front with the Communists. As far as we are concerned, it is not a question of depriving the "Revolutionary Socialists" of their supporters, but of strengthening the fighting power of the working class with the aid of the united front, and of preparing organizational unity.

Today we can declare that the united front in Austria is unshakable, that the overwhelming majority of the members and officials of the "Revolutionary Socialists" are for the united front. The will of the masses for unity will wipe out anybody who dares to come out seriously against the united front.

But at the same time the united front in its present form is only a stage on the road to organizational unity. With all our power, we stress the words of Comrade Dimitroff to the effect that our struggle against the class enemy demands a united political leadership, a united revolutionary party. The entire political situation in Austria demands the unification of the "Revolutionary Socialists" and the Communist Party, while the existing political preconditions in Austria facilitate this unification.

About a year ago, Otto Bauer advanced the slogan of unity "for a new Heinfeld.* Then he still dreamed of re-establishing the old Social-Democracy. He played with the slogan of organizational unity, and was convinced that the Communists would turn it down. He hoped that by this means he would succeed once again in splitting away the Social-Democratic workers who had become Communists after the February battles, from the Communist Party.

How did our Party reply to this?

At the conference of Socialists where, in the presence of Otto Bauer, the question was discussed of the slogan advanced by him "for a new Heinfeld" a Communist declared in the name of our Party that "we are

* The Congress of Social-Democracy which took place in the 'nineties in Heinfeld and which linked up the various separate Social-Democratic groups.

ready to unite with the 'Revolutionary Socialists' into a revolutionary party on the basis of the basic principles of Marxism and Leninism". Since that time Otto Bauer and the "Revolutionary Socialists" have no longer spoken of a "new Heinfeld". They have withdrawn this slogan. We are in favor of organizational unity on the basis of Marxism-Leninism. In his report Comrade Dimitroff indicated the conditions under which unification could take place. What doubts, what objections can the "Revolutionary Socialists" advance against these conditions? They declare themselves supporters of the irreconcilable class struggle, of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of revolutionary Marxism. Why, then, are they against unification with another revolutionary mass party, at a time when the desire of the Austrian workers for unity is greater than ever before?

The "Revolutionary Socialists" are afraid of breaking with the old Social-Democratic leaders who are partly still of a reformist mentality. I think that revolutionary unity will draw all the former Social-Democrats who are connected with the working class and who can and desire to learn from the lessons of the past, to its side. Only those who are not ready to give up the idea of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie will not take the road of unity. But the "Revolutionary Socialists" cannot fail to attach importance to the question of drawing these elements into a revolutionary mass party.

* * *

The "Revolutionary Socialists" declare that unification with the Communists would hinder their contacts with the workers of Western Europe. This is incorrect. Historical development refutes this argument. When the "Revolutionary Socialists" speak about the workers of West Europe, they have in mind primarily the workers of France and England. Would unity in Austria drive away the French workers? On the contrary! We are convinced that the French workers, Communists and Socialists, will enthusiastically greet unification between the Communists and the "Revolutionary Socialists". They themselves, in their strivings for unity, will regard the behavior of the Austrian workers as an example for themselves. And what about the British workers? Is it true that the workers of England would regard unification in Austria as something they do not understand? This is also incorrect. It is true, of course, that many reformist illusions are still alive in the ranks of the English working class. But the process of revolutionization which is taking place in the ranks of the world proletariat is not passing by without affecting the English working class as well. And it depends to a certain degree on the "Revolutionary Socialists" of Austria as to whether this process of revolutionization will be speeded up. What is even more, those workers who for the time being still think in a reformist fashion, will understand and endorse the fact that the Austrian proletariat, under the pressure of fascism, is creating a firm weapon of the class struggle in the shape of a united revolutionary mass party.

But when the "Revolutionary Socialists" speak of the workers of West Europe, they have in view, in fact, the Second International. It is true that they recognize themselves to be supporters of the Second

International, with not the same pride and joy as we recognize ourselves to be supporters of the Third International. They declare that they belong to the Second International only out of reasons of expediency. But what actually is this International? This International is a shaky conglomeration of parties which has begun to fall to pieces, this International does not embody a single will. Ever sharper does the antagonism grow in this International between two conceptions as to the path to be followed by the working class. The Third International, which rests on the Soviet Union, is becoming to an ever greater degree the center of all anti-fascist forces, the organizer of the mass struggle against fascism and imperialist war. The Second International is ever more clearly displaying its helplessness and its inability to point out the way to and aims of the workers and the masses of the people. Under these conditions, what can be the expediency of belonging to the Second International for the sake of an organizational fiction? By hanging on to the rotting Second International the "Revolutionary Socialists" are holding up the necessary process of differentiation. They will render a big service to the International working class movement if they speed up this process by joining with us.

The "Revolutionary Socialists" advance still another argument against unification: some of their officials declare that the parties of the Third International act on order from the Soviet Union, on orders from the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. In face of the results of the present Congress, it is hardly necessary to reply to this argument.

Is there any need today to point out that the interests of the mighty workers' and peasants' state coincide with the interest of the international working class, that the peace policy of the Soviet Union is a most powerful lever of the revolutionary struggle of the workers in other countries? I think, comrades, that this objection, after the report made by Comrade Dimitroff, and after the explanation given by our World Congress, falls away of itself.

Now a few words about Otto Bauer. In the recent period, Otto Bauer has on some questions, without a doubt, come close to the Communist position. Under the impression of the construction of socialism in the Soviet Union, under the impression of the united front in France, and of the events in Austria, he has declared himself to be a supporter of the dictatorship of the proletariat, although not yet in its historically tested form, namely, that of the Soviets. He recognizes the historic victory and socialist character of the Soviet Union. He recognizes the decisive role of the Soviet Union in the struggle for general peace. He is a supporter of the united front. We wish to take up a serious attitude to these declarations made by Otto Bauer. And for this reason we ask him what is the point in this connection of his last declaration about the "turn to the Right" of the Soviet Union and the Communist International. Does he wish thereby to state that we are making a turn to a reformist position? After this Congress the Socialist workers will very quickly understand how things are with regard to these turns.

The Communist International is turning still more decisively to the wide masses of workers, to the Social-Democratic workers who are moving towards revolution, and to all sections of workers who are ready to fight against fascism and the danger of imperialist war. (*Applause.*)

The Communists are completing this turn on the eve of decisive events so as to help the masses to become powerful and mature for decisive battles, and to ensure victory for the proletarian revolution. Otto Bauer is too wise not to understand this. He could speed up the process of the revolutionization and unification of the working class, by drawing the corresponding conclusions from his declarations, and by not isolating himself from the masses, but by helping them to still more speedily take the correct road.

We hope that the "Revolutionary Socialists" of Austria will also follow the path indicated to the workers by our World Congress. But much will depend on how speedily and consistently they follow this path. Our Party will do everything to convince them that as far as they are concerned, there is not, and there cannot be any other path than that of unification under the banner of the Communist International. And we shall do everything to render this path easier for them. (*Applause.*)

* * *

One of the most important defects in the work of our Party consists in the fact that we have not succeeded yet in extending the fighting front against fascism beyond the bounds of the proletarian united front, by drawing into it the dissatisfied petty-bourgeois middle sections of the population and the toiling peasants. We greet the successes achieved by our French Communist Party, which gives an example to all the Parties by its united front policy. We consider it necessary that the experience of our French comrades should be used in the countries where there is a fascist dictatorship. But I see a definite danger in the fact that certain comrades can presume that now there allegedly only remains the point of announcing the people's front with all its perspectives, and that this is the only key to success. We must clearly understand that the policy indicated by Comrade Dimitroff in his report has very wide consequences for the whole of our mass work.

We must not forget that the people's front in France is being brought about only under the powerful pressure of the proletarian united front. This shows above all how great is the power of attraction of the proletarian united front for the middle sections of the population and also for the toiling peasants. It is precisely in France where the argument of the reformists, who declare that the united front with the Communists drives the petty-bourgeois sections of the population away from us, is refuted. We must also not forget that the people's front in France has been brought about precisely because the proletarian united front has also become the representative of the direct interests of the peasants and the middle sections of the population, that, as Comrade Thorez so splendidly stated here, the French Communists have become the advocates, defending the immediate interests of all sections of the toilers.

I consider that it is precisely this idea that we must take as our guiding line in organizing a wide anti-fascist people's front, which goes beyond the bounds of the proletarian united front.

We must take care first and foremost of the day-to-day interests of the toiling peasants. What is the position in this connection in Austria? Wide masses of the peasants and urban petty bourgeoisie are at the present time profoundly disappointed with the so-called hierarchical

state. They take up a negative and hostile attitude to the ruling system. And it is precisely to these sections of the population that the Nazis appeal, utilizing their strivings towards a radical change, their strivings towards freedom. We must openly declare that for a certain time we underestimated the importance of the National-Socialist movement in Austria, that we missed the opportunity of making a timely beginning of the struggle for the masses of peasants, and the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia against the demagogy of the Nazis.

Hitherto we have been insufficiently systematic, insufficiently energetic in approaching the peasant question. Only if we support the peasants and their elementary demands, if we stand at the head of their struggle, will we succeed in winning their confidence and wresting them out of the hands of the Nazis. The masses of the peasants and the petty-bourgeois sections of the population should see in the Communists the consistent defenders of their economic interests. But not only defenders of their economic interests, but also the only consistent defenders of their lives and safety against the catastrophic policy of fascism, the only consistent defenders of peace against the fascist plans of war. Only in this way will we prove to be in a position to bring about an alliance with wide sections of the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie. We must show them that the struggle for peace corresponds with the struggle for the freedom of the workers and the toilers, and that only a free people is in a position to defend peace. Therefore, we must join all organizations to which peasants and the middle classes belong, and we must come forward as advanced fighters in all these organizations, as the representatives of the will of the toilers for peace and freedom.

What possibilities exist in Austria for establishing a wide anti-fascist people's movement? You understand, comrades, that this question is not so easy to answer in relation to Austria. In Austria wide masses of the peasantry and of the petty bourgeoisie are hostile to the domination of black and green fascism. And yet, considerable sections of peasants and of the petty bourgeoisie rest their hopes on National-Socialism. Under the pretext of protecting Austria against Hitler fascism, Heimwehr fascism fiercely suppresses all the strivings of the toilers for liberation. By this means Austrian fascism plays into the hands of the Nazis and renders it easier for the latter to make demagogic use of the hatred of wide sections of the people for the existing order, in favor of Hitler fascism.

Therefore, the Nazis in Austria have been able to advance the slogan of the people's front. In Austria they are now agitating in favor of a vote "by the people" on the question of re-establishing the old constitutional order. Why is it that the agents of German fascism in Austria have become fighters for a popular vote and freedom? So as to liberate the toilers from the fascist yoke? So as to return freedom to the toilers? The National-Socialists by their campaign for the people's front are trying to win influence over the toilers, and to utilize this influence to undermine the present system, and to establish a still more ferocious and barbarous system.

The people's front of the Nazis wishes to liberate the toilers from black and green fascism and to subordinate it to the yellow brand of fascism. The desire of the people for liberty is utilized so as to establish

the domination of National-Socialist fascism where there now is the domination of the Heimwehr. Their slogan of the re-establishment of the constitutional order is a brazen game with the strivings of the entire people for freedom, so as to transform them into the slaves of Hitler, to cast them into imperialist war, and to "unify" Austria with National-Socialism. The people's front of the Nazis in Austria is nothing other than a war front.

What front do the toilers of Austria need, and what kind of people's front should it be the task of the Communist Party to organize?

The struggle of the toilers of Austria is primarily one for their liberty. This struggle is at the same time a struggle for peace which is threatened by fascism. Who above all threatens the peace of Austria? German fascism, which is stretching its hand to seize hold of Austria. The peace of Austria is also threatened by Austrian fascism which, by oppressing the toiling people, is shackling those forces which alone are in a position to preserve peace for Austria against the rapacious efforts of the German warmongers. By raising the question of the Hapsburgs, Austrian fascism thereby strengthens the agitation of the Nazis in Austria, and renders it difficult for the forces of the European peace front to render support to Austria against Hitler imperialism.

Otto Bauer for some time supported the illusion among the Austrian workers to the effect that it was allegedly possible to conclude an agreement for the overthrow of the government, with the former "great Germans" and the landbunders, who at the present time have in greater part become National-Socialists. He has now changed his point of view, since he has become convinced that such illusions merely play into the hands of the National-Socialists.

The fighting front for liberty, and against fascism, can under no circumstances, and never be established by any kind of collaboration, by means of any kind of concessions to the "people's front" with the Austrian Nazis, who are deceiving the people. The fighting front for peace and the liberation of the Austrian people, must be directed with all its force against National-Socialism and its supporters in the camp of Austrian Heimwehr fascism.

But the proletarian united front in Austria must set itself the task, by displaying initiative in the struggle for the rights and liberties of the toilers, in the struggle against Heimwehr fascism and against the Hapsburg menace, to win the toilers who at the present time are inclined towards National-Socialism, and to prevent the National-Socialists from demagogically setting themselves against Austrian fascism as fighters for the liberties of the people.

We consider that the possibility exists on the basis of the proletarian united front to create in Austria a wide people's movement in favor of freedom for the toilers, for peace and for the independence of the Austrian people. But for the time being only the elements of such a movement exist, which have not as yet taken on clear features.

The first and the most important precondition and the basis for mustering the wide masses of the people of Austria against war and fascism is for us to consolidate the proletarian united front and to rouse to activity those former Social-Democratic workers who still stand on one side, with the aid of the free trade unions. Unification with the

"Revolutionary Socialists", for which we are striving, would transform the united revolutionary mass party into a center of attraction for all those who are dissatisfied, all those who are in opposition, and all those who are striving for freedom in Austria, and would to a considerable degree strengthen the power of attraction of the working class among all sections of the people. A further precondition is that we also penetrate the fascist trade unions, and all Christian, working class and peasant organizations. The peasants' union is energetically defending itself against the "totalitarian" efforts being made by the Heimwehr and against penetration by the Nazis. In connection with this defense, the Christian leaders of the peasant union are resorting to democratic phrases. We must seize on this and by well organized mass work in the peasants' union and in the other Christian organizations, we must raise the defense against the Heimwehr and the Nazis to the level of a struggle against fascism. It is only by such well organized mass work in these unions that we will create the preconditions for joint struggle by wide sections of the people against Heimwehr and Hitler fascism.

We are already drawing the attention of the workers and Christian organizations to the growing tendency of the Heimwehr either to liquidate or to subordinate these organizations to their leadership. The Heimwehr is under the pressure of Hitler fascism. The upper ranks of the Heimwehr still continue to remain a buttress of Italian imperialism in Austria, but a considerable section of the members and lower officials of the Heimwehr openly sympathize with Hitler fascism. Thus the government of the Heimwehr and the clericals is more and more being deprived of the possibility of seriously defending the independence of Austria against fascism. The "totalitarian" system of the Heimwehr would intensify the danger of "unification" with Hitler fascism.

In this process the proletarian united front can, in the struggle for freedom, peace and independence, win all those forces as allies of the working class, who are fighting against the "totalitarian" efforts being made by Heimwehr fascism, and against the "unification" of Austria with Hitler fascism. It is on this basis that the development of the people's front in Austria can take place.

The people's front in Austria under these conditions will become transformed into a fighting front for peace and liberty, into a fighting front for the independence of the country, against Hitler fascism and especially its Hitlerite adherents, in the camp of Austrian fascism. The establishment of a wide peace front is a feature peculiar to the policy of the people's front in Austria.

The people's front would be the unification of all forces, who in the struggle for the re-establishment of democratic liberties also come forward in defense of peace, *i.e.*, in defense of the independence of Austria against Hitler fascism. In its further development it can lead to the suppression of Austrian fascism, and the formation of a government basing itself on the forces of the people's front. This government would not yet be a dictatorship of the proletariat. The main points of its program would have to be the re-establishment of the democratic liberties of the toiling people, the disbandment and destruction of all fascist organizations, the abolition of all measures introduced by fascism, directed against the people, and the ensuring of peace and the independence of

Austria by way of linking up to the peace bloc led by the Soviet Union.

In characterizing the essence of such a government, Comrade Dimitroff said the following:

> "Such a government could not be a final salvation. It is not in a position to overthrow the class rule of the exploiters, and for this reason cannot finally eliminate the danger of fascist counter-revolution. Consequently it is necessary to prepare for the socialist revolution! Soviet power, and only Soviet power can bring such salvation!"

The situation in Austria may alter very rapidly. Our Party may very soon find itself faced with serious events, it may rapidly find itself in a situation where it will have to act decisively. In recognition of this, we must help the Party to grow to the level of its historic mission and responsibility, to correspond with the tasks which have risen before us. Our Party has grown, but we must note the fact that the ideological growth of the Party does not correspond to its political influence. This is fraught with serious danger. We must do everything to link up in the mind of each separate member of the Party, the greatest steadfastness on matters of principle with flexibility in tactics, and to combine the greatest clarity of political views with the greatest initiative in political action. Therefore, it is thrice necessary that every Communist should to the utmost understand and master the role of our Party, that our Party should arm itself with the experience of the glorious Bolshevik Party of the Soviet Union, and with the theory and practice of Marxism and Leninism. The process of development of the political crisis in Austria will depend on us. It will depend on the outlook, maturity and inner strength of our Party. The words of Comrade Stalin to the effect that "cadres decide everything", refer to the capitalist countries as well.

Our cadres are working with tremendous loyalty and self-sacrifice but they must, in correspondence with the complicated situation in Austria, become filled to a much greater degree than before with a live knowledge of and with the political purposefulness of Bolshevism. The Party must attract and educate new cadres as quickly as possible, so as to penetrate everywhere where the masses are, and so as to win the leadership in all mass organizations.

After the February battles in 1934, our Party took on itself the responsibility for the fate of the Austrian working class. The consciousness of this responsibility was the precondition for the successes achieved by our Party. But we are not satisfied with these successes. We measure them in correspondence with the tasks that face us, and we must say that not everything is in order yet. We have serious weaknesses, and we must do everything to speedily overcome them. A responsibility now lies on us not only for the Austrian working class, but a considerable share of the responsibility for peace in Europe also lies on us. Conscious of this responsibility for peace in Europe, we promise the World Congress that we will do everything possible so as to beat off the attacks of our class enemy on the Austrian sector of the front, and to transform our country into a bulwark of liberty and peace. We shall do everything so as to achieve not only new successes but also victories. (*Applause.*)

Mass Work of the Berlin Organization of the German Communist Party*

By K. ACKERMAN

COMRADES, the German Communist Party, driven by fascism into the deepest underground, has from the very beginning placed before itself the task of retaining contact with the masses; under no circumstances, notwithstanding the most cruel terror, to lose the everyday close contact with the masses.

Let us take for instance the most advanced organization of the German Communist Party—the Berlin Party. During Hitler's dictatorship, not a single day passed that the Berlin Communists did not fulfill their revolutionary duty. At present there are 5,000 Communists in the Berlin organization. We have created a strong united organization, consisting of over one hundred independent and jointly working committees. We have at our disposal a strong illegal press, led and guided from the Center. The press service, *Pressedinst*, is the organ supplying news to this press. In 1934, 49 issues were published, *i.e.*, it was being published regularly every seven days. This was carried on under conditions when workers were being sentenced to death for Communist activity. Thus, a few days ago, the fascist court sentenced to death Klaus, not for state treason, but for his work in the M.O.P.R. [I.L.D.]

Comrades, our cadres have steadily stood the most difficult trials. In some cases the entire composition of our committees were arrested ten times, and we on the eleventh built them anew. (*Applause.*) Forty active comrades of the Berlin Party were arrested in the last few months. In spite of the most brutal torture not one of them uttered a single unnecessary word. (*Applause.*)

The fascist terror is raging, but the Party has remained, and it is continuing to build and broaden its organizations.

Recently the state secret police published the following information: "In Berlin, the Communists have reconstructed their organization, and therefore it has become difficult for us to reach it." I think, that a better admission of our organizational and political successes could hardly be imagined.

But, comrades, we must here, before the Seventh Congress, state that this heroism of the German comrades was not always directed along the right road: we have sometimes run ahead of the masses, and too often placed ourselves under the blows of the Gestapo.** The German Communist Party has still a long road of Bolshevization to travel.

Comrades, for us only one strategy can exist—the strategy of overthrowing the fascist dictatorship—and only one perspective, that of destroying fascism and capitalism. In order to achieve this it is necessary to have unity of all non-reactionary, non-fascist, progressive forces, and

* Speech delivered at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International.
** Secret political police.—*Ed.*

those ready to fight for freedom in the united front against fascism. The creation of this front must not be hindered by differences in religion, points of view or the traditions of the masses. In order to create this front we need new concrete slogans, since the question is not an abstract one removed from the events of the day. We need not purely formal statements of our final aims but slogans for mobilization of the masses for the struggle against fascism around concrete partial demands, around the slogans of democratic freedom. Here is an example of the application of these new slogans in our work.

Prior to coming to power, fascism elaborated an "immediate program" (Sofortprogram) for the largest municipal enterprises in Berlin. We utilized this program in our work among the Berlin railway workers. We reacted immediately to this program and popularized it among the masses, demanding the fulfillment of the given promises. One of the important demands of the National-Socialist "immediate program" at that time was the abolition of the cut in wages by two pfennigs, introduced under the Bruening government. We gave no rest to the owners of enterprises regarding the decrease of these two pfennigs. Our propaganda enjoyed great success among the workers of the Berlin Union of Railway Workers. This reached a point when the very same fascist, who in his time advanced this "immediate program", called the Storm Troopers and told them:

> "If any of you utter a single word in connection with the 'immediate program' he shall find himself under lock and key."

Another example. How did we utilize the fascist slogan "of the beauty of the working place"? Previously we confined ourselves only to propagandist exposures of this slogan and were content with this. But now we tell the masses:

> "Yes, it is true, the beauty of the working place is necessary. We are for the beauty of the working place. We are for the fact that the cloakroom should be placed in order, that the lavoratory should be clean, that every worker should have his own locker for clothes. We propose that you should create a committee which would take care of the beauty of the working place. And if such a committee should be created, then it could occupy itself with other matters, not only with the beauty of the working place, but perhaps with the preparations for revival of free trade unions."

The masses began to speak a new language. Thus, for instance, the Berlin proletarians began to say: "I have a beef-steak, *i.e.*, brown from the outside and red inside". In this is contained a whole method. Now it is up to us. It is necessary to spread among the masses of people this new language and the idea of utilizing all legal possibilities of work. Are there in general any legal possibilities in fascist Germany? Yes, there are, and these possibilities make possible participation of the masses in the anti-fascist propaganda. We are beginning, after more than two years of Hitler's dictatorship, to convince ourselves that it is not sufficient to have a large number of newspapers and leaflets pre-

pared underground. Through them we influence, if we work well, only the thousands. But we must guide millions and organize them.

How should we advance? The problem is that of organized influence upon the masses, and to organize resistance against the fascist capitalist advance and against the war danger. This is the link which we must grasp.

At the same time work in the factories must occupy the foremost place. But we must clearly understand that without working in fascist mass organizations, we shall not achieve any improvements in the work at the factories. Without working in fascist mass organizations the overthrow of fascist dictatorship is impossible. In these organizations there are millions. Where, at present, are the Social-Democratic workers, organized and disorganized in the past: men, women, youths, adults, freethinkers, Protestants and Catholics? They all are in one or the other fascist mass organization. Only that Communist is in his place, only that Communist works well, who conducts work at his work and in fascist mass organizations, who knows how to link his own underground work with the legal and semi-legal methods of work.

National-Socialism does not allow any legal organizations except its own. But have the differences between exploiters and exploited, oppressors and oppressed, disappeared? Naturally not. Just for this reason, the fascist mass organizations, and primarily the Labor Front, must become an arena for conflicts and collisions between labor and capital. National-Socialism attempts to hinder this with the aid of terror, propaganda and reactionary legislation. Our task is to encourage and speed up this inevitable process, to push and direct it along the correct path. Our work in the Labor Front must consist not only in utilizing meetings and Strength in Joy evenings for purposes of conversations and discussions. Up to the present, we had approached too narrowly the questions regarding work in the Labor Front. Our work there must consist in encouraging the workers to defend their proletarian interests in this organization: the workers in their speeches attempt to raise the question of the fulfillment of their economic demands, and use the lower organizations of the Labor Front for defense of their trade union interests. This form of struggle is one of the most important forms of class struggle under the fascist dictatorship. The successful application of this form of struggle means the undermining of the fascist principles of the *fuhrer* (leader), and of fascist legality. And this in its turn means: in practice to lead the masses towards the overthrowing of fascism.

The German Communist Party can report to the Seventh World Congress only the first steps in this most important section of the front. Today, it is far from the whole of the Party that has reconstructed itself along these lines. Only the most advanced organizations and the most experienced of our comrades are systematically developing this work.

The number of defensive actions is growing in Germany. This resistance of the masses is now only being realized in the form of primitive short-lived, but numerous acts of struggle.

All this resistance and these actions have not been caused by illegal propaganda alone; these actions were always in some way connected with the utilization of legal possibilities.

How are we working in the fascist mass organizations?

At the end of last year, Ley and his adherents, leaders of the German Labor Front, intended to organize at the enterprises, workshops and conveyers, individual small detachments of the Labor Front, in order to subject the workers to the oppression of fascism in a more organized form. They had to reject this plan simply because they were not able to find any people in the working class whom they could trust, who could guarantee them the introduction of their plan. Besides they were afraid that these small groups of the Labor Front would turn into points of support for the opposition against fascism. With the growth of disillusionment among the masses and with the gradual, but incessant narrowing of the mass base of fascism, the fascist organizations are ever more in need of functionaries. We must utilize this need in order to implant our people, honest revolutionary workers, among the functionaries.

For instance, the work of a cell of the National-Socialist charitable organization was recently checked. This organization, as is known, carried out the so-called "winter aid" campaign. What did the checking of this cell reveal? Out of the 22 functionaries, 14 had to be discharged, because they were found to be former Social-Democrats and Communists.

One of the comrades told us how he used his post. He received a list of tenants of one of the houses, in order to conduct work there. He took advantage of it, so as to conduct systematic anti-fascist propaganda. He acquainted himself with the life of each family in this house; he had the possibility of visiting the apartments and could use various methods of anti-fascist propaganda, dependent upon the family, while also making use of the distribution of the "winter aid".

Another, and not less important and interesting experience is the following. It has been discovered that if good work is conducted in fascist mass organizations the lower functionaries of the latter can find themselves our allies in certain points even when they are not under our direct influence. There were scores of cases when the National-Socialist workers, even those still feeling themselves to be Hitler's adherents, agreed with us in certain questions. Experience showed that it is possible, even if only step by step, to make the functionaries in the lower mass fascist organizations depart from Hitlerite ideology.

Another example proves that the situation in the Storm Troop organization has also changed. During recent years, from about the middle of 1933, the cleansing of the Storm Troopers took place. It would of course be naive to presume that Hitler expels Storm Troopers because they have un-Aryan eyes. No, they are expelled because Hitler considers them to be elements corrupting Storm Troop organizations.

In one of the workers' districts, the following event took place. Old Storm Troopers, the so-called old fighters, requested a known comrade to come to their meeting and tell what the Communists want. When the official meeting ended, the leader of the Storm Troopers was able to organize the matter in such a way that this Storm Troopers' meeting was changed into an evening of explaining our position.

The Storm Troopers were mainly interested in the question that seemed to bother their conscience. They asked our comrade what would

happen to them when Communists seized power. It was clear to them that, after Hitler, the Communists would come to power, but they wanted to know what would happen to them. Our comrade very courageously and clearly explained our policy to them. He stated:

"If you will follow us now, if you will conduct work in the interests of the people within the Storm Troop organizations, then your entire past will be forgotten, we extend to you our hand in the struggle for the present and the future."

Comrades, the work in fascist mass organizations is indissolubly connected with our policy of the united front. The slogan of the united front and slogans calling for work in the fascist mass organizations do not contradict each other. Social-Democratic workers are the central figure in our work in fascist organizations as well. The Party is on the road towards the policy of a wide united front; at present we can better than before establish friendly contact with the Social-Democratic workers. In the course of the last few months, many Social-Democratic organizations have been exposed. In the future we shall have to render comradely assistance in their struggle with the secret police. We have a considerably greater experience in underground work than Social-Democratic workers.

Lately we had also to note a number of important shortcomings in conducting our policy of the united front. We had up to now been too inactive, made too great claims to the Social-Democratic workers, and we have been able to come into contact only with radical workers. We limited ourselves to the creation of the united front with such workers, who were already on the road to us. But this is not a wide united front for which we must strive. We need a united front with all the workers, and primarily with those who are still Social-Democrats. On the basis of their own practical experience they will outlive their waverings and illusions in the process of united struggle.

In our policy of the united front we have not given enough attention to the so-called "trifles". It sometimes happens that in enterprises, joint actions by the Communist and Social-Democratic workers were put off for weeks, because of the opinion that it was necessary first of all, according to formal considerations, to convene a united session, and for this we were not always able to find a suitable place. In the same way, the opinion that the united front must necessarily begin with an official and formal agreement is incorrect.

While conducting our policy of the united front, we, for a long time, have not pursued a correct policy for building a real united front with Social-Democratic organizations and their leadership. Numerous comrades stated that, in general, there are no Social-Democratic organizations at the enterprises and in the districts, and that there are only individual Social-Democrats. In the majority of cases this is by no means correct. Comrades maintained this point of view because they approached the Social-Democratic organizations with the same measures as that of the Communist Party. If they were not able to find a cell or regularly published newspapers, they considered that Social-Democratic organizations in general did not exist.

The development of unity of action depends also, to a large extent,

upon our success in explaining to the Social-Democratic workers and functionaries the concrete possibilities for the realization of this unity of action.

This happened during the elections of the "factory councils". In many enterprises the Social-Democratic workers approved our proposal to elect honest workers into the "factory councils", but at the same time the workers asked: how could they achieve it? And where our comrades were able to explain how and in what measure it is possible to realize our tactics, we achieved good results. And on the contrary, where we could not accomplish this nothing was achieved.

The comrades had for months, waveringly and cautiously, conducted propaganda for the revival of the free trade unions. Even now many Social-Democratic workers think that by our slogan of the revival of free trade unions we desire to deceive them, that we desire in this way to achieve the revival of Red trade unions. We must do away with such opinions.

We will achieve this not only by means of propaganda and nice statements. This can be realized if we will really honestly and consistently, to the end, and in practice conduct a struggle for the creation of free trade unions based on proletarian democracy.

We have fought long in order to find a correct form for the revival of free trade unions. After our first positive experience and when we began to apply it in practice, we began to achieve speedier successes. In various parts of the country we have created a network of lower organizations and illegal free trade unions.

Our comrades very often do not realize what the creation of groups of free trade unions within the Labor Front means.

What does it really mean? The question of the revival of trade union groups within the Labor Front is not only organizational; it is a political question. Labor Front is the most important place of action of the trade union group. The trade union group, which embraces in the conditions of illegality only a part of the workers at the enterprises, must in the Labor Front be the bearers of the trade union interests of the working masses.

We have attained the first considerable results in introducing our tactics of the united front. *This is an agreement of the united front with the Berlin committee of the Social-Democratic Party.* This agreement regarding the united front has been realized only after very extensive work at the factories and workers' quarters, where the Communist and Social-Democratic workers jointly came out in the struggle against the fascist terror. This is why agreement regarding a united front with the Berlin district committee of the Social-Democratic Party became possible. *This agreement will play an enormous part in the future development of the united front.* We consider that by this we have caught on to the fundamental link in the solution of problems facing the German Communist Party, namely, the problems of creating an anti-fascist people's united front.

Forward in the struggle for a Communist Party, which not only conducts heroic struggles, but which can conquer in a Bolshevik way! (*Prolonged applause.*)

The People's Front in France*

By M. THOREZ

COMRADES, the report made to the Seventh Congress of the Comintern regarding the fascist offensive and the struggle for working class unity against fascism raises questions of extraordinary importance and of exceptional international significance. No one could throw light on these questions with greater competency and with greater authority than Comrade Dimitroff, the victor in the conflict at Leipzig. (*Applause.*)

The indictments against the bloody barbarism of fascism, pronounced from this, the highest of all existing tribunes, are the same accusations that Comrade Dimitroff hurled at Leipzig in the face of the Goebbelses and Goerings, the sinister supporters of the sinister Hitler, in the name, as he proudly declared, of the Communist International and of all the toilers of the earth.

The example of the calm and invincible courage of Comrade Dimitroff gave a powerful stimulus to the movement for working class unity, to the unification of all anti-fascist forces against the greatest crime history has ever known. Millions of Communists, Socialists, anti-fascists, workers and scientists throughout the world followed with intensity the heroic battle which Comrade Dimitroff conducted against the slave-drivers of the German people, against those who are attempting to execute our glorious Thaelmann.

The name of the Bolshevik Dimitroff is pronounced with the greatest gratitude, love and admiration by all those who are ready to unite to defeat the ferocious offensive of fascism.

Marcel Cachin has painted a live picture before the Congress of the fierce struggle taking place in France between the reactionary forces of fascism, and the progressive and revolutionary forces of anti-fascism. This struggle, which is being carried on in France, is undoubtedly assuming tremendous international importance. The outcome of this struggle, the fate of our own anti-fascist movement, will for many years determine the future not only of the French people but also of other peoples in Europe. Recognizing the full responsibility which lies on our Communist Party, not only before the toilers of France, but also before our brothers in other countries, we take the liberty of adding our share of the rich experience of struggle to Comrade Dimitroff's speech which was so powerful and so simple.

FASCISM IN FRANCE IS A REAL AND IMMEDIATE DANGER

The powerful people's front demonstration on July 14 called forth a wide response throughout the whole world. Never as yet has Paris seen a demonstration of such dimensions. A half million men and women passed from the Bastille Square through the National Square to the old suburb of St. Antoine, rich with revolutionary reminiscences.

* Speech delivered at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International.

On the initiative of the Amsterdam-Pleyel* Committee, numerous organizations took part in the demonstration held on July 14, in Paris and throughout France. Among them were the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, the Radical Socialist Party, and both Confederations of Labor (the revolutionary and reformist unions), the League of the Rights of Man, various ex-servicemen's organizations, the United Sports' Federation, the leagues of the Communist, Socialist, Republican and Radical youth, etc. It was with enthusiasm that the masses greeted the people's front and its slogans of the direct struggle for peace and freedom. The masses demonstrated their special gratitude to our Communist Party, the pioneer in the struggle for working class unity, the initiator and organizer of the people's front, The masses cried out: "Soviets everywhere!" This slogan has now become the most popular in France.

However, as Comrade Dimitroff stressed yesterday, it would be very dangerous for us to fall into the illusion that fascism has already been beaten. At the very hour when the people of Paris declared their determination to bar the way to fascism, Colonel de la Roque held a review of his armed civil war detachments. There were 35,000 of them. Invited by the head of the government to "set alight the flame at the grave of the unknown soldier", they marched past in fighting order. We know that the "Fiery Crosses" (this is the name of this organization) have arms, motorcycles, automobiles, and airplanes at their disposal. The fascist enemy has not been crushed. He is carrying through a reorganization of his forces and is preparing for new attacks. The danger is growing. The profound causes which give rise to fascism, and which make it possible for it to develop and gather strength, have not disappeared. The unceasing sharpening of the general crisis of capitalism, the prolonged character of the economic crisis, are more and more reducing the standard of living of wide masses of toilers. The international bourgeoisie are in need of fascism so as to prevent and hold back the discontent of the toiling masses and to prepare a war, securing their "rear" for this purpose.

The curve of production in France has dropped once again and is approaching the lowest point noted in 1932. Unemployment has increased by comparison with last year. In spite of all possible privations which the workers, employees, peasants, shopkeepers and ex-servicemen have suffered for three years, the deficit in the state budget continues to grow. Fifteen billion francs have been deducted from wages, pensions, relief and from credits designed for measures beneficial to the population. As a result of the economic crisis, tax receipts are continually declining, while the war budget is increasing, and the expenditure on the police is growing. The Laval government has made use of the exceptional laws and has again only just adopted a decision to "effect economies" amounting to eleven billion francs. The government is cutting down the wages of civil servants, office employees, and workers employed in state enterprises by 10 per cent. It is cutting ex-servicemen's pensions and the pensions of former civil servants by 10 per cent. It is deducting 10 per cent from the interest received by the small investor.

* In 1933, the Second International Congress of the Amsterdam Anti-War Movement took place in the Pleyel Hall in Paris.

A tremendous wave of dissatisfaction is rising in the country. In spite of prohibitions, arrests and dismissals, the number of cases of mass action in Paris and in the provinces is growing. The revolutionary upsurge is developing. Communist influence is extending. This is why the French bourgeoisie are aiming at bringing about a fascist dictatorship, and are arming and inciting their hired bands. This is why the government tolerates and endorses the actions of the "Fiery Crosses", at the very time when the people's front demands that they be disarmed and disbanded.

In addition, certain circles of the big bourgeoisie are declaring against the Franco-Soviet mutual assistance pact. They are carrying on a campaign against the Soviet Union and against Communism in general. They are preaching the idea of a rapprochement with Hitler Germany. They have the support of the most reactionary elements, of the fascist groupings; their leaders are carrying on negotiations with Hitler. They have even found their mouthpiece in the person of the renegade Doriot.

As distinct from other countries, fascism in France is less widespread among the peasant population. Hitherto, in spite of all efforts, the fascists have recruited their supporters to a much greater degree in the towns, among office employees, and the managing personnel in the big enterprises and institutions, and among shopkeepers and members of the free professions, rather than among the peasants. This is to be explained by historical and political conditions, and particularly by the fact that since the period of the great revolution, France has been a country of bourgeois democracy.

When analyzing the general and particular conditions of the development of fascism, we must pay special attention to the subjective causes which have rendered it possible for fascism to be temporarily victorious in certain countries. We have in view mainly the isolation of the working class, or its insufficient influence over the middle classes who have been carried away by fascism and who have fallen under the political leadership of the big bourgeoisie, and also the split in the ranks of the working class called forth and supported by the reformist policy of Social-Democracy.

The course of events in Germany where several Socialist or coalition governments held power, and also in Austria and Spain, where Socialist Ministers had also been members of the government illustrates this tragic reality with especial clarity. The agreements made by Social-Democracy with the bourgeoisie were augmented by the stubborn refusal of Social-Democracy to organize a united front with the Communists.

Although the armed struggle of the proletariat in Austria and Spain and the battles in Vienna and Asturias did not succeed in hindering the victory of fascism, nonetheless they led to an extension of the united front. The Communist and Socialist workers shed their blood together in the struggle against the common enemy for the great and noble cause of the liberation of the working class. The events in Germany, Austria and Spain, shed a sudden light on the path facing the wide masses of our brother-Socialists.

They opened the eyes of these masses to another policy, the policy of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, the policy of the Comintern.

What a striking contrast between these two paths, the one presented to the working class by Social-Democracy on the one hand, and by the Comintern on the other hand!

The path of Social-Democracy led to defeat, fascism, terror, economic crisis, and its murderous consequences for the working class: unemployment, poverty, hunger, the degradation of human beings, and to crown this gloomy picture, the ferocious armament drive, the preparation of a terrible war which will turn the entire world into an abyss of ruin and bloodshed.

The path of the Comintern led to the victorious construction of socialism, the miracles of industrialization and collectivization, a prosperous life, the cultured development of liberated peoples, to a newly acquired joy of living and the love of creative labor, to a new world which raises the individual through raising the community, to the land of the Soviets fighting for peace.

Glory to the Bolshevik Party!

Glory to Lenin who led the working class to power over one-sixth of the globe and who outlined the path which we are taking now.

Glory to Stalin, the beloved leader of the international proletariat, who, genius that he is, has provided the solution of the problems of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R., and who is leading the international proletariat to victory! (*Applause.*)

By the very fact of its existence, the Soviet Union lays bare and stresses the internal and external contradictions of capitalism. It sharpens and deepens the general crisis of capitalism. It is a mighty lever of the proletarian revolution throughout the world. By its live example it is winning the workers and toiling masses for socialism, is drawing the masses into the struggle to conquer power and for the construction of socialism in their own countries.

In these general conditions of the offensive of fascism, and of the parallel growth of the forces of revolution, the resistance of the masses and the extent of the anti-fascist movement in France assumes tremendous international importance.

The advent of Hitler to power in Germany has galvanized the forces of reaction in all capitalist countries. In Austria, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and even in France, the success of the National-Socialists, which has shaken the working class, has at the same time strengthened the fascist elements and fascist aspirations, and has strengthened fascism in those places where it is already in power. At the same time, the danger of a new imperialist war and of an onslaught on the Soviet Union has increased.

At the same time the successes of our anti-fascist struggle in France are giving life to the forces of the working class and the anti-fascist movement in all capitalist countries, assisting in postponing imperialist war, and preventing an onslaught on the Soviet Union.

The extent and scope of the anti-fascist movement in France are to a certain degree altering the relationship of forces on an international scale in favor of the proletariat revolutionary camp.

THE LESSONS OF INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Prior to speaking about the development of the struggle between

fascism and the working class in France, it will be useful to direct our attention to what the toilers in France have learned from the heavy lessons of other countries, and particularly of Germany.

In his report, Comrade Dimitroff explained that the Communist Parties were not sufficiently strong to draw into the struggle against fascism the working class and all the toilers, whose ranks were split by the ruinous policy of Social-Democracy. The source of many weaknesses and defects in the anti-fascist struggle in many countries lies in an incorrect estimate of fascism, and at least in a confused idea of the specific essence of fascism as compared with bourgeois democracy, the result of which could only be passivity, an underestimation of the danger of fascism and of the terrible menace to all peoples, represented by its ferocious dictatorship and its adventurist, provocatory foreign policy which leads directly to war.

When there were people who, in connection with every act of repression, hastened to declare that "fascism has already arrived", this by no means made it easier for the workers to understand the fascist menace, and the methods of struggle necessary to compel fascism to retreat. When Heinz Neumann wrote that the Bruening government was a fascist dictatorship, he set our German comrades on the wrong track, and prevented the Communist Party from rallying all the toilers against their worst enemy, Hitler fascism. A failure to understand the role of fascism, which is at one and the same time a product of the degeneration of capitalism and a weapon of the fiercest offensive of capitalism on the working class, also led to a certain fatalism.

In March, 1931, at the Eleventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I., Comrade Manuilsky exposed the tremendous mistake of those who noted only the first of those elements of fascism and ascribed a revolutionary role to fascism.

At the Twelfth Plenum, Comrade Ercoli pointed out how dangerous it was to wait for the automatic and speedy collapse of fascism in those countries where the fascists have already succeeded in seizing power. A similar position taken up by our Italian Party, which was too long tied up in sectarianism, prevented it making use of the crisis which followed on the assassination of Matteotti.

Other weaknesses and defects arose out of a superficial and incorrect estimate of the development of the struggle, of the relationship of class forces, out of the alternation of the successes and defeats of fascism, and also of the appearances of differentiation and regroupings in the fascist camp.

"The course of the revolution is not as straight as the Nevsky Prospect", Lenin loved to repeat, when quoting the great revolutionary, Chernishevsky. Neither is the course of the counter-revolution a straight one. The periods of the successes and consolidation of fascism are followed by periods when it marks time or when it retreats under the pressure of the masses or in the face of growing difficulties. Within the fascist camp itself friction and an internal struggle develop. In such a case it is essential to double the attacks on fascism, but we must not cry out that "fascism has already been conquered", or that it is already on the eve of collapse.

The main weakness in a number of countries, especially in Germany, was that there was no united proletarian fighting front against fascism. German Social-Democracy preferred to bury itself under the ruins of the Weimar Republic than to agree to united action with the Communists. Unfortunately, the German Communist Party did not bring about the united front, for the organization of which Comrade Thaelmann and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany issued the call.

The crisis of Social-Democracy, the decline of its influence and the ferment to which this gave rise among some sections of the working masses, do not always represent progress, in spite of the reactionary character of the leaders of Social-Democracy, insofar as the workers who leave Social-Democracy are not drawn into the united front. It leads to a weakening of the working class, which is made use of by fascism. Great as were the successes achieved by our brother German Communist Party, which succeeded during the elections in winning 6,000,000 votes, they nonetheless could not balance the tremendous gains made by the Hitlerites. Similar phenomena were recently repeated in the German regions in Czechoslovakia. While the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia achieved a big victory in the election in the Czech and Slovak regions, and in Carpathian Ukraine, in the German regions, on the other hand, the Hennlein party, which is close to the Hitlerites, swallowed up the bourgeois parties, and to a considerable degree, Social-Democracy as well, and also grew strong at our expense.

Other fundamental defects consisted in insufficient attention being paid to the partial demands of the toiling masses, especially to the needs of the peasants and other sections of the population, who have become victims of fascist demagogy. Finally, it has been the case that our comrades have wavered at a time when the situation demanded decisive mass action, which alone could tip the scales in favor of the working class.

* * *

In his famous work entitled *The Class Struggle in France*, Marx wrote that the revolution organizes the counter-revolution, and in view of the laws of dialectics, the counter-revolution in its turn arms the revolution, creating a really revolutionary party which grows mature in the struggle against the enemy. This thesis of Marx helps us to better understand the stages and character of the development of fascism in France, and also the growth of the mass resistance to the fascist offensive.

Groups of a definite fascist type appeared for the first time in France at the end of 1924, in connection with the powerful demonstration that took place when the ashes of Jaurès were transferred to the Pantheon. This was in the period of the first "Left bloc", *i.e.*, of the Radical governments supported by the Socialist Party. As a result of the campaign conducted by our Party against the occupation of the Ruhr and against the Poincaré government, the influence of the Communist Party grew.

The bourgeoisie financed the organization of a fighting detachment against the working class. This first attempt, however, suffered defeat,

both as the result of the general situation and as a result of the energetic resistance offered by the Communist Party.

In reply to the action undertaken by the fascist leagues, the Communist Party still further increased its activity. At that time we were the only ones to carry on a struggle at the head of the toiling masses, against the war in Morocco, and later, in 1926, against the Poincaré government.

In 1929, French imperialism, which at that time stood at the head of the mortal enemies of the U.S.S.R., was feverishly preparing for war, and in view of the growing influence of the Communist Party, undertook a new attack against it and against its central organ, *l'Humanite*. Fascist groups came on the scene again. It is characteristic of this period that the French bourgeoisie favored counter-revolutionary emigre and whiteguard groupings, and supported their criminal undertakings.

As a result of the arrest of the leaders of our Party, the Barbé-Celor group succeeded at that time in securing the leadership of our Party and in directing the revolutionary movement along sectarian lines, which rendered it easier for an attack to be undertaken by the bourgeoisie against the working class, and favored the treachery of the Pupist leaders.*

After the Barbé-Celor group was exposed and its opportunist sectarian policy had been uprooted, the Party renewed its march forward. In 1932, during the period of the second "Left bloc" government, which coincided with the sharpening of the economic crisis, the beginning of the financial crisis and the chronic deficit in the state budget, in the period when fascism was conducting a ferocious offensive in Central Europe, the growing dissatisfaction of the masses, and the correct policy of the Party in the struggle for partial demands, strengthened the tendencies towards the united front and trade union unity; the anti-fascist movement (Amsterdam-Pleyel) which began at the call of Romain Rolland and Henri Barbusse developed successfully.

At the end of 1933, a big scandal took place in French financial circles. The fascist groups were about to try to make use of this, and to raise a campaign against parliament and the Radical Party which at that time belonged to the government.

The leaders of the fascist leagues and the reactionary politicians tried to deflect the righteous indignation and dissatisfaction of the people against the swindlers and their accomplices, the parliamentarians, ministers, higher court officials, ambassadors, police prefects, retired generals, honored members of the "Legion of Honor", away from Communism and to direct it along a channel favorable for capitalism. They carried through a fierce campaign in the press and attempted to organize numerous demonstrations. On February 6, 1934, the fascist and reactionary leaders advanced their detachments to storm the Chamber of Deputies. But the resistance offered by the working class was swift and successful.

After the 6th of February our Party organized counter-demonstra-

* Pupists, a group of renegades who split from the Party and formed a so-called "Party of Proletarian Unity".

tions. On February 7, the suburbs, roused by our efforts, came into the movement. The Deladier government resigned.

The reactionary Doumergue was called to power.

Demonstrations of every kind were prohibited. The Socialist Party gave up its demonstrations on the Bastille Square which it had organized for February 8. But in spite of police prohibition, the Communist Party carried through the demonstration it had arranged for February 9, on the Republican Square. The grandchildren of the Communards, the proletarians of Paris and of its Red suburbs, responded with splendid unanimity to the call issued by the Communist Party. For five hours the struggle went on against the police. A third of Paris was the arena of these conflicts, which developed in the districts in the eastern part of the city and the streets which bounded on the Republican Square. Everywhere there could be heard the cries of "Down with fascism"! "Soviets everywhere"!

The Socialist leaders attempted to hold back their workers by arranging meetings in closed buildings, but the Socialist workers left these buildings to join with their Communist brothers. The civil servants organized in their independent unions formed a solid column and marched along the Boulevard Magenta toward the Place de la Republique. Ten killed remained on the roadway, and among them were several non-Party workers and one cement worker, a member of a reformist trade union.

The bold struggle conducted by the Communist Party in Paris sent an electric current through the workers and peasant masses in the provinces. It was a signal and an example. Four million five hundred thousand workers throughout France took part in the general strike begun on February 12, and declared by the reformist General Confederation of Labor under pressure from the Unitary General Confederation of Labor (the Red trade unions) and the Communist Party. For the first time, columns of Communists, Socialists, and supporters of the revolutionary and reformist trade unions marched in joint demonstrations. Throughout France more than a million people took part in these demonstrations, and in Paris alone, two hundred thousand people participated. Much moved revolutionary masses participated on February 17 in the burial of the victims.

On the initiative of the Communist Party, the working class of France succeeded in resisting the first big attack made by the fascists. (*Applause.*)

But Doumergue was in power, *i.e.*, the government of national unity in the service of big capital. The government favored the criminal activity of the fascist bands, which, after the half-collapse in February, were striving to bring about an increase in their influence. The efforts made by the fascists to arrange parades or to organize meetings gave rise to counter-demonstrations by the workers throughout the country. In this connection, ten workers were killed in conflicts with armed fascists who were protected by the pelice. But each victim still further strengthened the will of the working class for the struggle.

The Communist and Socialist Parties signed an agreement to undertake a joint struggle against fascism. The middle sections of the popu-

lation began to be attracted to the working class which was uniting its ranks.

At the cantonal elections in October, 1934, the Communist Party met with splendid success, and held up the advance of the Right parties which were close to fascism. Doumergue was compelled to resign.

In view of the rise of Communist influence, and of the growing strength of united working class action, the fascist groups are doubling their activity. Some of them are composed of hired bands with no great influence among the masses. But the "Fiery Cross" organizations are developing and intensively continuing their preparations for civil war.

During the last governmental crisis, Colonel de la Rocque, the leader of the "Fiery Crosses" declared that "if the Lefts come to power, we shall have some 'sport' ". The brazen threats of de la Rocque, his rehearsal of future punitive expeditions, led to the Radicals coming closer to the people's front. They joined in the demonstration of July 14.

As a result of the growing resentment of the masses called forth by the application of the exceptional decrees by Laval, we are faced with a still further intensification of the struggle, and its development on a still higher scale.

In France there is now to be observed the stagnation and to a certain extent the decline of the influence of fascism. Sharp conflicts between the various fascist groupings can be observed. Dissension is beginning in many groups. Throughout France the fascists have not succeeded in bringing about the complete unification of their forces. The "Young Royalists" are in conflict with the "Patriotic Youth", the "Francists", and the supporters of "French Solidarity" are carrying on a struggle in their press against the "Fiery Crosses", etc.

The Agrarian Party has not yet succeeded in organizing what it calls the "Peasant Front". The leaders of this party have separated from the fascist Dorgeres who is acting for the benefit of the landowners and big agriculturists. In the Taxpayers' League which is headed by the reactionaries, the first split has already taken place and it is threatened by a second split insofar as its leaders, the lackeys of big capital, are striving to justify the exceptional decrees.

The same is taking place among the ex-servicemen and the small shopkeepers' associations, those who on February 6 followed the lead of the fascist groupings. The reactionary leaders who are sympathetic to the fascists are frequently in a difficult position in view of the ever-growing influence of the Communist Party and of the people's front among the rank and file of these organizations.

Among the Catholics, voices are already being raised against the penetration of the fascists into the Catholic organizations. The local organizations of the "Christian Youth" have expelled members of the "Patriotic Youth" from their ranks. The attacks made by Hitler on the churches have also found their reflection in France. On July 27, in Boulogne, in the suburbs of Paris, a big meeting was organized to demand the liberation of Thaelmann, attended by 10,000 people. At this meeting, side by side with the Communists, the speakers were Socialists, the former Radical Minister, Pierre Cote, and a Catholic priest who complained of the persecution to which the church was subjected by

Hitler, and called for an organized struggle against fascism. Finally, certain reactionary leaders are displaying black pessimism. Among them is the former Minister Tardieu. He has openly turned on his friends of yesterday. He has condemned them and others, accusing them of an absence of manliness.

And once again, under the pressure of necessity, the big bourgeoisie who are apprehensive of their domination are stimulating the most determined and most militant fascist elements and their leaders to reorganize their ranks. This has led to a great development of the "Fiery Cross" movement. The "Fiery Crosses" and the national volunteers declare that they have more than 300,000 members at the present time. They are organized into sections which in their turn are divided up into groups. Their leader Colonel de la Rocque, a former officer of Department No. 2 of the General Staff, has a brother who is now in the service of the Pretended to the Throne of France. He served in Morocco as an Intelligence Service Officer. Then he resigned so as to be able to secure a well-paid post in an electro-technical trust. On becoming the leader of the "Fiery Crosses" he began to direct this movement along a clearly fascist path. His program consists of the following formula: "Pacification of France, love for the home country, and reform of the constitution". Translated into working class language, this means service to capitalism and the bourgeoisie. The anti-capitalist, anti-parliamentary and anti-government demagogy of the "Fiery Crosses" is a poor cover for the real points of their program such as the abolition of social insurance legislation, the operation of the exceptional laws, etc. It is quite clear that they are subsidized by the electro-technical trust which is headed by M. Mercier, who is a member of the "Fiery Crosses", by the big banks headed by Finaly, by the Comité des Forges and the Banque de France headed by de Wendel, who has membership card No. 13 in the "Fiery Cross" organization.

A few words about the methods of work of the "Fiery Crosses". They organized soup kitchens, and dressmaking classes for young girls, they organized the distribution of cheap clothes, medicaments, medical assistance at home, following in the footsteps of the Communist municipalities. They established bureaus of social aid and children playgrounds. They organized clubs for young people, theatres, choirs, physical culture halls, and summer holiday camps for school children. They even organized certain repair shops for young unemployed under cover of teaching them a trade. They established sun-bath stations and rest homes.

The "Fiery Crosses" organized such a soup kitchen at Villejuif where there is a Communist Municipal Council. The Communist Party recommended the unemployed to eat the soup handed out at these "Fiery Cross" soup kitchens, and at the same time organized demonstrations against the fascist leaders. For a period of three weeks a struggle developed here against the fascists, which enthused the workers throughout France. The unemployed led by the Communists made their way onto the streets, singing the *Internationale* and with cries of "put de la Rocque against the wall!", and "hang de la Rocque!"

There is no need to add that after this the fascists closed down their soup kitchens.

I have already referred to the speech made by de la Rocque in Algiers where he declared that there would be some "sport" if a Left government were formed.

Here is an extract from the last of his speeches, delivered after the fashion of Hitler on the night of June 23, 1935, at Chartres:

> "Weighing the whole seriousness of my words, 'Fiery Crosses', I declare that this night is the eve of struggles. A few weeks will pass and we shall be in power—this I vow to you. Make full use of this short interval of time which now remains so to perfect your sections that at the moment I select and when I give the order everything should be ready to the last detail. We shall wipe out parliamentarism. . . . Let the French flag wave commandingly over the entire country."

The French fascists are fanning chauvinism against the "foreigners". In particular they are fanning anti-Semitism. They are attempting to come to an agreement with Hitler against the Soviet Union.

I will not stop again to deal with the considerable material resources at the disposal of the "Fiery Crosses", but I will limit myself only to a few words about the methods they use in mobilizing their forces. Within a radius of 100 kilometers, the "Fiery Crosses" gather together at a definite point. The leader comes from Paris by automobile or in an airplane. During his trip to Algiers, de la Rocque carried through a review in which thirty airplanes took part. The "Fiery Crosses" are linked up with the highest officers and generals in the army, in particular with the present Minister of Aviation. M. Laval was compelled to recognize this in the declaration he made before the opening of the parliamentary session. The church and the priesthood also support the fascists.

The fascists have already repeatedly killed active workers. The language of the fascists is a cynical one. In the Mosell district they distributed a leaflet which stated the following:

> "Fascism will be victorious even if we have to achieve this by disembowelling them, by devouring their hearts and by turning out their intestines."

In their newspapers the fascists write about the need for getting their revolvers ready. They engage in shooting exercise. They have already directed their attention to the Radicals, have beaten them up and wounded them, especially those Radicals who are leaning towards the people's front.

The victory of fascism in France would mean the economic and political suppression of the toiling masses. It would bring the workers starvation wages and the abolition of the already meager social legislation, the prohibition of strikes and the suppression of all resistance to the capitalist offensive, the destruction of the trade unions, and the dispersal or "co-ordination" of the working class cooperative societies.

The victory of fascism would mean an unlimited reduction in the

salaries of civil servants, would mean their dismissal and gross militarization. The government of "National Unity" has already done away with 5,000 jobs among the teachers.

The victory of fascism would mean that the shopkeepers and handicraft workers would be handed over to the license and merciless exploitation of big capital, of the landlords, trusts, transport companies, of M. Mercier, the king of the electrical industry, of M. de Wendel, the head of the Comite des Forges.

The victory of fascism would mean that the peasants would be sacrificed to the interests and privileges of the landowners, monopoly capitalists and finance magnates, and would mean the ruin of the peasant farms.

The victory of fascism would mean the mockery of, and foul onslaughts on the intellectuals to which the greatest scientists such as Perrin and Langevin are now being subjected by the fascists. It would mean that the bonfires of the middle ages would be set on fire after the fashion of Hitler Germany.

The victory of fascism would mean the abolition of all liberties, bloody terror, the complete enslavement of the toiling people, arrests and the murder of active working class fighters; it would mean the beating up of Communists, Socialists, Republicans and Democrats.

The victory of fascism would mean that Catholics and Protestants, as well as Jews, would be beaten up, as is now the case in Germany.

The victory of fascism would be a catastrophe for France, and would mean the victory of the most outrageous reaction throughout the whole of France. And finally, *the victory of fascism in France would mean* aggression directed against the U.S.S.R.

We want at all costs to avoid the catastrophe, and to save our country, the whole of Europe and the entire world from these horrors. (*Applause.*)

The beginning of this has already been laid.

How did we set about this?

How have we done this, comrades?

THE DEFENSE OF THE DEMANDS AND LIBERTIES OF THE FRENCH PEOPLE IS THE BASIS OF THE PEOPLE'S ANTI-FASCIST FRONT

The starting point for the successful development by our Party of the united people's front against fascism was that we concentrated our attention on the direct demands of the masses of the toilers, on defending their day-to-day interests.

The Party, guided by the valuable advice of the Communist International, tried to elaborate and formulate a series of special demands for each category of the toilers.

We fought and we are fighting against the reduction of the wages and salaries of workers and civil servants, for the 40-hour working week without wage reductions, for collective agreements, and for real social insurance exclusively at the expense of the employers and the state.

We fought and we are fighting for the provision of work for the unemployed, for unemployment benefits, for unemployment benefits to

be increased, and for the organization of free food and the handing out of coal, clothes and milk for the children.

In our municipal councils we are doing everything possible for the unemployed. In Ivry, for instance, milk is delivered free of cost by municipal transport to the children of the unemployed. (*Applause.*) The older children receive free meals in the school dining rooms. Such facts known to the workers, especially to the workers of the Paris district, have very much helped to bring about the successes we achieved at the last elections.

We fought and are fighting for the protection of the children and working class youth. Our Young Communist League organization, under the leadership of the Central Committee of the Party, has worked out a program of the defense of the interests of the toiling youth, and this has become the basis of the united front of the youth.

We have fought and are fighting to defend the interests of the poorly paid office workers, railwaymen, postal and telegraphic workers, and against the exceptional decrees and against dismissals.

We have fought and are fighting for the rights of ex-servicemen and against any reductions in their pensions.

We have fought and are fighting for the interests of house tenants, small shopkeepers, handicraftsmen and peasants. We are demanding reductions in rents and taxes, and the organization of immediate aid for all victims of the crisis.

We have fought and are fighting against the high cost of living, and are drawing the toiling women into the struggle against the middlemen, while striving not to set the consumers against the peasants or the small traders, but are striving, on the contrary, to muster them against the common enemy, big capital.

We have supported the peasants who have demonstrated against reductions in the prices of their agricultural products. We have proposed that a moratorium on the debts of the peasants should be carried through; we have demanded that they should be given "crisis aid", that they should be given loans without the payment of interest, and that they should be given loans of seeds and fertilizers.

We have worked out definite demands, but have not hesitated to include in our programs the demands which have been put forward by other organizations, even such as are hostile to the Communist Party, on condition that these demands correspond to the desires of definite sections of the toilers and correspond to the interests of the working class. The success of our work may be best judged from the following extract from the Paris paper, the *Republique*, dated July 27:

> "The Communists," writes this paper, "are perfecting their tactics with every day that passes. These tactics are simple, but without a doubt have the power of attraction. They (the Communists) are systematically basing themselves upon those who are dissatisfied. As soon as anyone dissatisfied appears anywhere he is met on all sides with 'Comrade! the Communists are for you'. If it is a question of the exceptional decrees affecting the ex-servicemen, the cry is, 'Comrades, the Communists are for you'. Or a question of office employees or civil servants, the

Communists are here again. . . . The Communists," writes the paper, "are everywhere! They are for the farmers, for the sharecroppers, for the peasants, in general, and for house tenants. And since the whole of France is dissatisfied, they are the people who are fighting the battle of the whole country." (*Applause.*)

We have not limited ourselves to merely formulating the urgent needs of the toiling masses. We have also pointed to the sources from which they could be financed. We have proposed that the war budget should be cut down, that police expenditures should be reduced, that loans given to the big banks who dictate their will to the government should be recovered. But the main thing is that we have proposed that an extraordinary progressive tax should be introduced on capital. Our entire campaign was carried through under the slogan of "Make the rich pay". And we have not only carried through the campaign, but, to the extent that we have secured control of the big municipal councils and secured the necessary means, we have put our proposals into life. The state allows the municipal councils to impose a progressive tax on trading and industrial buildings. In Paris, this tax is fixed at 3 per cent independent of the size of the enterprise. In Ivry, where the municipal council is Communist, we have introduced the tax to the extent of 1 per cent on those who pay a rental of less than 10,000 francs per annum, *i.e.*, on small shopkeepers, up to 2 per cent on those who pay a rental of 10 to 20,000 francs per annum, and up to 6 per cent on those who pay more than 20,000 francs per annum. This tax has brought the sum of 1,275 thousand francs into the local budget. And it is on this money derived from the employers of Ivry, that we hand out milk to the unemployed. (*Applause.*)

The entire press has been compelled to write about our program. Prime Minister Doumergue has repeatedly, in his speeches over the radio, in his conflicts with the Communists, based himself on our agitational material and criticized our financial proposals. In this connection, we issued a placard signed by our Central Committee entitled, "The Communist Party Replies to M. Doumergue". This placard was tremendously successful. Its contents and its deliberately restrained tone made a great impression on the small middle-class business men.

The Party is trying to reply to all the urgent questions of the day, and to give its decisions on all current questions.

Several days ago, our Central Committee worked out a "*Plan of Financial Recovery*". The Party advanced its proposal regarding the taxation of big businesses and the measures to be adopted against the rich, as the main feature in this plan. The plan also includes the demands that the French bank be transferred to the state, and that state control should be established over the private banks. In view of the financial crisis and the speculation in the franc, the problem of the Banque de France has become a very urgent one. Marx once stressed the fact that the financiers and bankers are interested in the state budget having a deficit. A deficit and state loans, as far as the bankers are concerned, represent at the same time a means of speculation, a source of profit and a means of subordinating the state to their arbitrary

will, under the threat of bankruptcy. At one of the congresses of his party, the Radical Daladier declared the following:

> "Two hundred families have become the undoubted masters not only of French economic but also of French politics."

He only repeated what Lenin once wrote, to the effect that:

> ". . . the French Republic is a financial monarchy, is the complete domination of the financial oligarchy; the latter controls the press and the government."*

The rulers of the French bank are among these two hundred families. They are the owners and the administrators of the big banks, mines, blast furnaces and railroads. The Communist Party simply proposes that the Governing Council of the bank, which is the master of the credit and currency of the country and actually rules the country, should be done away with.

The importance of our proposal is only underlined by the ferocity with which the reactionary and fascist-inclined press hurl their abuse at these proposals.

One of the pre-conditions for our successes in the organization of a broad anti-fascist front in France is the position of the Communist Party on the question of bourgeois democracy and the revolutionary traditions of the French people, which we are bringing to life again. Fascism and bourgeois democracy are two forms of the dictatorship of capital. But it by no means follows that it is a mater of no importance to the masses of people as to what is the economic and political form of the enslavement to which they are subjected.

Fascism means bloody terror directed against the working class, the destruction of the organizations of the working class, the disbanding of the trade unions, the prohibition of the Communist Party, mass arrests of workers and revolutionaries, and the torture and murder of the best sons of the working class.

Fascism is unbridled ferocity; it means new St. Bartholomew Eve massacres, the destruction of culture of every kind, the domination of obscurantism and brutality, terrible war to which Hitler and Mussolini are leading.

Bourgeois democracy still represents a certain minimum of unstable, half and half liberties, which are uninterruptedly cut down by the bourgeoisie who are in power, but nonetheless, bourgeoisie democracy allows the working class and the toiling masses the possibility of rallying and organizing against capitalism.

In his report to the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U., when showing that the "idea of storming capitalism is maturing in the minds of the masses". Comrade Stalin added:

> "This, as a matter of fact, explains the fact that the ruling classes in the capitalist countries are zealously destroying, or nullifying, the last vestiges of parliamentarism and bourgeois

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. V., "Imperialism the Highest Stage of Capitalism", p. 49. International Publishers, New York.

democracy which might be used by the working class in its struggle against the oppressors."*

In his speech yesterday, Comrade Dimitroff quoted the words of Stalin to the effect that fascism is not only a sign of the weakness of the working class, but also a sign of the weakness of the bourgeoisie.

Stalin has given us the key to the solution of the problem facing the Communist Parties, in particular those facing our Party. He has explained to us that fascism is not a whim of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie must ensure their position and preserve their mass basis so as to bring about their class domination. They are compelled to resort to fascist methods in view of the extreme sharpening of all the contradictions of the capitalist system.

Stalin has shown us the entire importance for the working class and the toiling classes of a stubborn struggle to preserve democratic rights and liberties, and the remnants of bourgeois democracy, which the exploited and oppressed can use in the struggle against the capitalist enemy and their weapon, fascism.

The working class of France recognizes how weighty are these guiding marks of Comrade Stalin, the leader of the international proletariat. Educated and led by the Communist Party, the working class of France also recognizes what great possibilities for mobilizing the middle sections of the population are opened up by the defense of the liberties to which the French people are so profoundly attached. Comrade Dimitroff was quite right in pointing out that we must not close our eyes to the way bourgeois democracy is being gradually cut down, to the gradual fascization of the state, and to the necessity for struggling step by step in defense of every democratic liberty however insignificant it may be.

The objective conditions are extremely favorable to us in this struggle. France is a country with a long-standing bourgeois democracy, the classic country of the bourgeois revolution. The working class of France have participated in many revolutions. The Paris Commune was the first example of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The French peasants hate the descendants of the feudal lords of the middle ages. They hate the landowners, priests and former princes. The peasants know that the Great French Revolution gave them the land. In 1848, the peasants, who did not understand the meaning of the Second Republic, threw themselves into the arms of Louis Bonaparte, because the big bourgeoisie and the financial aristocracy burdened them from the beginning of the February Revolution with new taxes and increased mortgage payments, thus threatening the ownership by the peasants of their parcels of land. Later, under the Third Republic, the French peasants, who constitute the majority of the population of our country, received tangible benefits. Until very recently the bourgeoisie tried to spare the peasants. The bourgeoisie spread the illusion that, in view of universal suffrage, the peasants were masters of the country. And in reality, the peasants were and remain the arbiter of the situation. The French peasant is a republican. This is no empty phrase. It was sufficient to expose the

* Stalin, "Report on Work of the Central Committee to the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U." See *Socialism Victorious*, p. 11, International Publishers, New York.

fascist agitator, Dorgeres, as a royalist, for the peasants of the Blois electoral district, extremely dissatisfied though they were with the actions of the government, against whom this fascist was making attacks, to ensure his defeat at the supplementary parliamentary elections.

Our Party has not hesitated to appeal to the revolutionary traditions of the masses. In one of his letters, dated September 21, 1890, Engels wrote the following:

> "Among these [conditions] the economic ones are finally decisive. But the political ones, etc., and indeed even the traditions which haunt human minds, also play a part, although not the decisive one."*

Hitherto, the bourgeoisie have succeeded in exploiting these traditions to justify and consolidate their domination. But now, revolutionary traditions are becoming an additional weapon in the hands of the working class in its struggle against the domination of the bourgeoisie in its fascist form. We make use of the past to prepare the future.

In the name of the working class, we advance our rights to the intellectual and revolutionary inheritance of the Encyclopædists of the eighteenth century who prepared the great revolution of the year 1789 by their works. We show that their materialist teaching, deepened, developed and enriched by the genius of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin have become the teachings of dialectical materialism, Marxism-Leninism, the theory and practice of the revolutionary proletariat, the great builder of socialism, now in power over one-sixth of the globe.

We see how the working class Communists are attempting to "appropriate the heritage of science accumulated by the whole of mankind". And this is at a time when the bourgeoisie, especially fascism, are attempting to throw us back to the barbarous periods of the middle ages, and are rejecting the heritage of the Encyclopædists, and are turning away from the theory of Darwin, burning the works of Marx, and supporting prejudices and ignorance.

In the name of the working class, we advance our right to the heritage of the Jacobins, to their courage and revolutionary energy.

Lenin said that: "The Bolsheviks are the Jacobins of the proletarian revolution". He wrote:

> "The bourgeois historians see in Jacobinism a downfall (to 'sink'). The proletarian historians regard Jacobinism as the greatest expression of an oppressed class in its struggle for liberation. The Jacobins gave France the best models of a democratic revolution; they repelled . . . the coalition of monarchs formed against the republic. . . .
>
> "It is natural for the bourgeoisie to hate Jacobinism. It is natural for the petty bourgeoisie to fear it. The class-conscious workers and toilers have faith in the transfer of power to the revolutionary, oppressed class, for *that* is the essence of Jacobinism, and it is the only escape from the present crisis, the only way of stopping economic disintegration and the war."**

* The Correspondence of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, pp. 475-76, International Publishers, New York.

** Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XX, Book 2, p. 278, International Publishers, New York.

We cherish the memory of the Commune of 1793 and the Paris Commune of 1871. In opposition to the chauvinism of the fascists and the patriotism of the cannon merchants, we advocate our love of the fatherland, love of our people.

We are proud of its glorious past, its age-long struggle against slavery and oppression. And we, the grandchildren of the sans-culottes of 1792, the soldiers of Valmy, refuse to allow the aristocrats—the successors of the Coblenz emigrants who returned to France in the train of foreign counter-revolution, as is Colonel Count de la Rocque, whose great grandfather fought in the army of Condé and the Prussian king, to speak in the name of our country. We shall unmask them as the traitors of yesterday and of tomorrow, more prepared even than their forefathers, or the Russian whiteguards of our own time, to turn their arms against their own fatherland for the sake of maintaining or regaining their privileges and their profits.

The national conference of our Party which took place over a year ago at Ivry—in June, 1934—advanced most forcefully the thesis which was developed so brilliantly by Comrade Dimitroff in his report.

We spoke in the same strain from the parliamentary tribune; we popularized this thesis at all our meetings, in our posters and throughout all our agitation.

We are, at the same time, fighting today with still greater energy for the right of self-determination for the people of Alsace-Lorraine, for the independence of the colonial peoples.

Influenced by the policy we have been pursuing in Algiers, the Arabian workers with the support of the toiling Europeans made a huge counter-demonstration in reply to the demonstration of the "Fiery Crosses". Inside France we have been successful in arriving at agreements with many groupings and individuals for the struggle against the Régnier decrees, which are detrimental to the interests of the entire people of Algiers.

The reactionary press raised a hue and cry because the tri-color flag was flown side by side with the Red flag at the head of the July 14 demonstration. The reactionary bourgeoisie knows very well that this is a sign of the alliance between the petty bourgeoisie and the working class, an alliance which they fear above all. We shall not allow fascism to usurp either the flag of the Great Revolution, or the *Marseillaise*, the hymn of the soldiers of the Convent. (*Applause.*)

When Comrade Duclot read the Communist Party declaration at the July 14 rally, he explained the meaning to us of the *Marseillaise*, the hymn of the past, and the *Internationale*, the hymn of the present and the future. In greeting the representative of the Communist Party, those demonstrating sang first a couplet from the *Marseillaise*, and then a couplet from the *Internationale*.

Last year we had already begun to carry on work along these lines among the soldiers, the sons of the people, and among the republican officers. We expressed the hope that they would not allow themselves to be drawn into a struggle against the people, that if it became necessary they would be able to frustrate the plot of the reactionary fascist officers and generals, aimed against national liberties and against the

country. At the rally of the national front on June 14, Rucart, a Radical deputy and vice-president of the war commission of the Chamber, made a speech, and I would ask your permission to quote his words, so much do they coincide with the thoughts expressed yesterday by Comrade Dimitroff.

> "The Republicans know that they can depend upon the loyalty of the army—an army composed of the sons of the whole of the people, and which will not support those who try to make it an instrument of the ambitious designs of one man or of an insignificant group of plotters. We greet the officers, non-commissioned officers, soldiers and sailors of the land, air and sea forces, whose calling is to defend freedom."

In the eyes of the masses of the people we are supporters of freedom and independence for our country, we are representatives of the interests of the present and of the future of the French people. The tone of our campaigns, our speeches, articles and manifestoes, expresses the consciousness of the historic mission of the working class, organized and led by our revolutionary party.

This policy has made it possible for the French Communist Party to bring about, to stimulate and to direct the movement, which is a mass movement on a broad scale. Elements among the working class who were hitherto passive, have been drawn into political life. Considerable sections of the petty bourgeoisie have also been drawn into the struggle against fascism.

Naturally, different elements and social categories united under the banner of the national front have their own particular, varied, and often conflicting interests. Hence it follows that the Party must be able to satisfy the material needs of all sections, to render ideological and political assistance to the whole movement and to organize it from the viewpoint of the proletariat which represents the interests of the whole of the toiling people of France. But it is still not enough merely to formulate demands—this is only the first step. We realize that we must gain at least minimum concessions by means of mass actions.

We must also put forward slogans and proposals that will raise the movement to a higher level. We are the Party of the proletariat, of the class which is exploited most, which is most homogeneous, and which is therefore, the most revolutionary; a class which can expect complete emancipation only from a fundamental transformation of society. The Communist Party, armed with the theory of Marxism-Leninism, is alone capable of pursuing the consistent policy, which has been justified so brilliantly in the Soviet Union. It is quite a different matter with our allies. The petty bourgeoisie, rural and urban, hate capital; they loathe in particular the bankers who have credits at their disposal; but they believe in the eternal existence of their own property and even in the possibility of augmenting it. The representatives of the liberal professions, the middle and higher officials, are imbued with illusions and prejudices of another kind. They believe that society of today can be improved gradually by peaceful means. Among these, elements of anti-fascism lives at times, side by side with a certain amount of chauvinism.

They see fascism primarily as Hitlerism and the fascism of his bands. The parties and groupings of the middle strata reflect their illusions and prejudices. They are unable to pursue a consistent policy, they are inclined to waver. We are trying to convince them that the success of the anti-fascist movement can be assured only in so far as the toiling, non-proletarian masses will rally to the working class, as to the nucleus.

How can we facilitate the transfer of the petty bourgeoisie to the position of the working class? This can be done only by proving in actual practice the ability of the working class to lead the common struggle and by displaying the strength of the proletariat. Comrade Manuilsky said the following in his speech at the close of the Eleventh E.C.C.I. Plenum:

> "Allies can be won to the side of the proletariat by demonstrating the strength of the proletariat and its vanguard—the Communist Party."

The masses of the people in the town and village, the middle strata particularly the peasantry, obviously play a very important historical role. They never, however, play an independent role; they either fall under the influence of the big bourgeoisie, of capital and become the instrument of their policy, or they adhere to the working class.

In the first event, the result is an increase in the exploitation and oppression of all toilers, and, in our epoch—fascism. We have proof of this in the experience of France 1848-1852, of Germany 1918-1923, and of Spain, ever since 1931.

In the second event the result is the abolition of exploitation and oppression of the people, the rise of democracy and of national liberties. This has been brilliantly confirmed by the experiences of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Finally, our Party must mobilize all the wealth of organized methods in order to unite and consolidate the national anti-fascist movement.

In spite of actual successes, organizational work still remains our weak point. There are thousands of committees. The Amsterdam anti-war movement alone, which was skilfully led by Barbusse, unites over two thousand committees, but even this is quite insufficient. Moreover, many committees are merely created from above, by calling together representatives of different organizations which take part in the movement. The Party must strive for democratic election of committees in the workshops, in general meetings among the villages and street blocks. In order to do so, the initiative of the masses, who have already found different ways of uniting, must be used.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

Comrades, our Party, by working actively among the masses, by paying the maximum attention to the demands of all sections of the toilers, has been able to bring about the success of the national front throughout the whole country. We have to a considerable extent been successful in spreading our influence to the working class and to the petty folk of the middle strata.

When, in October, 1934, the Central Committee raised the question

of the people's front and laid down its program, we did not imagine that we should have the rapid successes which we are achieving.

We informed the Socialist Party of our decisions. But without waiting for a reply, which the Socialist Party delayed for a long time, we took the initiative before the masses—at a big central meeting called by us the day following our meeting with the representatives of the Socialist Party—of creating a broad people's anti-fascist front.

The Party conducted a campaign systematically in the press, in manifestoes, in meetings, and from the parliamentary tribune. On the eve of each of the last two congresses of the Radical Party—the October congress in Nantes, and the March, in Lyons—the Communist Party organized big meetings at which representatives of the Central Committee explained our conception of the people's front, addressing themselves in particular to the delegates to those congresses.

A prolonged public discussion with the Socialist Party began. Meanwhile the workers and the petty bourgeoisie welcomed the people's front. The "people's front" formula and its whole meaning was triumphant among the masses during the last municipal elections. Even bourgeois and fascist opponents used no other expression to signify the broad union of anti-fascist forces that was gradually becoming perfected under the influence of our policy.

At the end of May, the Communist Party decided to extend the people's front still further and to make a proposal to the Left parties to organize joint action against the fascist organizations and to introduce a resolution in parliament demanding from the government disarmament and the disbanding of the fascist leagues. Our parliamentary fraction which at that time was composed of nine deputies (out of a total number of 615 members of the Chamber) took the initiative in calling together the Left parliamentary groups. The Socialist Party joined us in the initial steps. The Radical Party, the Socialist Party of France (Neo-Socialists), the group of independent Lefts and the Pupists accepted this proposal.

The meeting took place on May 30. There was a discussion on the declaration of the Communist Party, which amounted approximately to the following:

> "We, Communists, want to defeat fascism. The municipal and canton elections show that the greater part of the country is against the policy of so-called national unity, which paves the way for fascism. This majority can find expression here also, because the groups which respond to our call form the majority in the Chamber. If this majority wants to put through a program which hits the wealthy and the speculators, which helps the poor and unemployed, we, Communists, will support this measure. If this majority wants to defend democratic liberties not in words, but by adopting effective measures for the purpose, such as disarmament and the disbanding of fascist leagues, and the arrest of their leaders, we will support these measures. A policy of this kind, we said, will create in addition the best conditions for maintaining peace, and we shall support this policy not only in parliament, but throughout the country as well."

This declaration made a strong impression. We renewed our proposal at the open session from the parliamentary tribune. The same evening, the Flandin government was overthrown. The Radical deputies under our influence displayed somewhat more courage than hitherto.

Then, again at the initiative of the Communists, the Left groups met once more. There was a discussion on the question of the possibility of creating a Left government. Our Communist Party directed the discussion, raised questions, pointing out, moreover, that it had no intention whatsoever of participating in a Left government, but that it was prepared at any time to support measures favorable to the toiling masses. The Socialist and Radical Parties were compelled to define their own positions.

At this time the Bouisson government was formed. But the pressure of the masses, expressed in the position taken up by the majority of the Radical deputies elected by the peasants, was so strong that Bouisson was overthrown on the day that his cabinet was brought before parliament.

A meeting of Left deputies was called again. The Socialist Party made its collaboration with the Radical Party conditional upon the acceptance of a program of socialization, to which I will refer again later. The Radical Party rejected this. Then our Party made the following declaration, which was immediately published in *l'Humanité:*

> "The Communist Party put on record that the Chamber has twice expressed itself against emergency powers which would be a menace to democratic liberties and would worsen the position of the toiling masses. . . .
>
> "These votes express the will of the country, most clearly expressed at the municipal and canton elections, to finish once and for all with the policy of so-called 'national unity' to which are sacrificed the lawful interests of the working class and all toilers. . . .
>
> "The Communist Party, while putting forward socialization of the means of production and exchange in its program as the chief demand, which will be realized by the workers' and peasants' government, considers it possible and essential at the present moment to pursue a policy of positive action, relying upon a broad people's front.
>
> "In renewing its previous declarations concerning its attitude to a possible Left government, the Communist Party repeats that it is prepared to support, both in parliament and in the country, all measures which ensure a stable franc, energetic repressions against speculation, defense of the interests of the toiling population, defense of democratic liberties, disarmament, the disbanding of fascist leagues and the maintenance of peace."

At this time the Laval Ministry was formed. The Communist Party interfered most actively in both of the last ministerial crises. The reactionary and fascist press emphasized the success of our tactics with much irate shouting.

The Amsterdam Pleyel Committee at the time took the initiative in

connection with a national demonstration on July 14. They were joined by numerous groups and organizations, including both the Confederations of Labor and the Radical Party. The Executive Committee of the Radical Party especially called for this purpose, having heard the report of its chairman, Herriot, decided almost unanimously to join in the demonstration.

And now? The Communist Party has now drawn considerable masses of the middle strata to the Left, and brought them to the working class. Strengthened by the fervor of the masses, the Communist Party aided in the downfall of two ministries in succession. New problems will arise before our Party. The question arises of the possibility of a united front government or of a people's anti-fascist front.

Of course, for us there can be no question of parliamentary combinations like those allowed by Brandler in Saxony in 1923.

Neither is it a question of a "labor government" like those that we have seen or will see in England and any one of the Scandinavian countries; still less of coalition governments as in Belgium, Czechoslovakia and Spain. It is not a question of managing the affairs of the bourgeoisie. It is a question of fighting against fascism, of barring their way to power, relying upon the rise of the masses and on their actions outside parliament.

We, the Communists, are fighting for Soviet power, for the dictatorship of the proletariat. We know that this is the only means of finishing once and for all with the crisis, with poverty, with fascism and with war. But we also know *that at the present moment only a minority* of the working class and that only a minority of the toiling people of France, share our conviction and are fighting, with *firm determination for establishing the power of the Soviets.* The power of the Soviets, therefore, cannot be the immediate aim of our present struggle. But, even though we are in a minority, we can and must lead the majority of the country, which is already now filled with a determination, at whatever cost, to prevent the establishment of a fascist dictatorship, we can and must convince the masses—in the course of the struggle and on the basis of their own experiences—of the necessity of arriving at the Soviet Republic.

The dissatisfaction that is accumulating and flowing into numerous demonstrations against emergency decrees can lead to an explosion. The people's front, growing in depth and breadth, can be faced with the task of taking the place left by the governments of "national unity".

A new ministerial crisis will signify the beginning of a serious political crisis. Laval is alleged to have said to Herriot: "If I go, because of the opposition of the Radicals, the parliamentary recess will end in a dictatorship of the 'Fiery Crosses' ". The Communist Party, the driving force of the people's front, can play a decisive role in the coming events. If the people's front lacks solidarity and courage, in place of the Laval government, the government of "national unity", there may come a more reactionary political grouping, there may even be established a fascist dictatorship. We must remember the stages which formally, by legal means, led from the Herman Müller government to the Hitler government—through those of Bruening, von Papen and Schleicher.

If the Communist Party, on the contrary, puts forward, propagates,

and popularizes the minimum measures, of a transitional character, which can "still further shake the economic and political power of the bourgeoisie and multiply the powers of the working class", and force this timely acceptance, then the movement of the masses by its pressure could insist upon the necessity for a government of the people's front, which our Party would support and participation in which it might even consider expedient.

The anti-fascist struggle would then become still more fierce, for we would have to offer resistance to an attack of reaction and fascism even more cruel and persistent.

But the people's front and the Communist Party would occupy new positions which we should have to make use of in preparation for the setting up of Soviet power, of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This is without doubt a bold policy which demands great firmness and caution. Our Party can realize such a policy. It no longer risks losing itself in other parties or being confused with them. In open battle over a period of fifteen years we have won our place on the political arena. Not only the Communist Party, its members and activists, but sympathizers as well, recognize its exclusive role and its particular aims, towards which it is progressing entirely independently; but both the allies and the opponents of Communism are already recognizing today, each in their own way, our peculiar proletarian and revolutionary outward appearance, and they reckon with our strength and our activities.

We acquired this independence especially thanks to the adoption of the tactics of "class against class", tactics by force of which the face of our Party was shown to be absolutely different from all other parties, including also the Socialist Party. And our action on February 9, 1934, was guided by this same principle of independence.

Adhering to a completely independent mass policy, which strictly corresponded to the interests of the proletariat, our Party considered it its duty to fight passionately for the establishment of unity of struggle among the working class itself.

FOR THE UNITED FRONT OF THE WORKING CLASS

The Communist International has never ceased to fight for the realization of the desire of the working class for unity. It has never ceased to advocate unity of struggle for all proletarians. During the course of many years it has appealed in vain to the Socialist Labor International to organize a united front in all countries.

On March 5, 1933, the Communist International suggested that its Sections appeal to the Socialist Parties with a proposal that a bloc of all toilers should be made everywhere for the struggle against the menacing successes of advancing fascism and to ensure help for our brothers in Germany.

On October 10, 1934, the Communist International appealed directly to the Socialist workers and to their leadership, proposing the immediate organization of joint action in defense of the workers and peasants of Spain who were being subjected to a violent attack by the reaction of the fascists and of the monarchy.

On October 15, 1934, in Brussels, Cachin and I, on behalf of the

Communist International, met representatives of the Socialist Labor International, Vandervelde and Friedrich Adler.

While we were striving to get a positive reply to our honest and serious proposals from the leaders of international Social-Democracy, they confronted us with the question: "Is this a maneuver or a change of line in Moscow". We gave them the retort they deserved. Comrade Cachin declared:

> "It is painful to me to hear you talking about maneuvers. We are in Europe, which is two-thirds fascist. If fascism gets a stronghold in Spain tomorrow [this was in the heat of the fighting in Asturias], what strength, what might it will acquire, what enormous encouragement that will be for the French fascists! To what an extent the fascist danger will increase throughout the world! And if you think that in such a moment we are thinking of maneuvers, then you have an extremely second-rate opinion of us. We are right up against the danger. The fire has spread to our homes. The most terrible menace hangs over the working class. This is no maneuvering on the part of the Communist International."

And I added:

> "Allow me, Citizen Adler, to say most frankly that on the part of Moscow there is no new line, there is no maneuver on a big scale. No, and there will be no change in the policy of the Comintern. We consider that what has been done by us is correct. I will add this, that, in our opinion, the experiences of the Bolsheviks when contrasted with the experiences of the Socialist Parties, are a convincing and, moreover, a decisive force."

Comrades, you are aware of the results of the negotiations. The delegates of the Second International delayed the reply until the session of their own Executive Committee which was to take place in November. This delay was a form of refusal. When the members of this Executive Committee met, they could not come to agreement concerning the text of the reply to the Comintern on the subject of its proposals. They were forced to be content with taking back, as they expressed it themselves in their letter, the instruction formulated in their resolutions of March 18 and 19, 1933, forbidding individual parties to conclude a united front on a national scale. From now onward, they wrote, each Socialist Party is free to act at its own discretion.

We met with out first success. Need we recall further that in April our Communist International once more proposed to the Second International to organize joint demonstrations on May 1, against fascism and war, and that once more the results were negative.

Meanwhile the united front little by little is being realized in France.

During the course of twelve years, beginning with 1922, we have appealed to the Socialist Party 26 times. Each time we met with a refusal, at times rude enough.

The first serious step was made in July, 1932, in connection with the Amsterdam Congress. In the French delegation to this Congress there were many Socialists—official delegates from local, district and even

regional organizations. Despite the prohibitions and the expulsions, fraternal relations were established in the anti-war committees.

In March, 1933, after the letter of the Comintern, when we appealed to the Socialist workers and their leadership, we got no direct reply. But Blum, in a series of articles tried his utmost to turn his party away from the united front. At the same time international events, and especially in Germany, influenced the state of mind of the Socialist workers, as it was possible to record at the congress in the Pleyel hall in 1933.

Only the events of February 6, 1934, gave the decisive impetus. The Socialist workers rushed into the fight shoulder to shoulder with the Communist workers, joining in the offensive begun in Paris and the provinces by the Communist Party.

On May 30, we made a proposal to the Permanent Administrative Commission (the Central Committee of the Socialist Party) to organize a joint struggle for the release of Thaelmann. We had a meeting with Blum and Zyromski. The negotiations dragged on for several weeks and once more culminated in the refusal of the leadership of the Socialist Party to accept our proposal. But meanwhile the Socialist Federation of the Seine department (the Seine regional organization) passed several proposals put forward by our regional committee. The Socialist Federation of the Seine agreed to participation in the demonstrations of July 8 against the "Fiery Crosses". Since then the initiative of the Communists has been meeting with a more lively response among the masses of the Socialist workers themselves. On July 15, when the National Council (the Plenum of the Central Committee) of the Socialist Party met, we made a public proposal to them to conclude a pact for joint struggle against war and fascism, which they were compelled to accept.

You know, roughly, the essence of this pact. It was a question of the joint organization of struggle against fascism. We proposed that the struggle against the emergency decrees should be conducted not only in the form of political demonstrations, but also in the form of strikes. We also proposed that the Communist and Socialist Parties should appeal jointly to both trade union organizations—the reformist and the revolutionary. The Socialist Party refused. We made concessions on the question of restricting criticism and, guided by the letter of the Comintern of March 5, 1933, we signed the following point:

> "In the course of these joint actions, both parties will refrain from mutual attacks and criticism of those organs and leaders who loyally participate in these activities. However, outside joint activities each party retains the right to conduct completely independent propaganda for recruiting to its own ranks, without resorting to insults directed against the other party."

This pact brought much to the working class of France. It increased the desire of the masses for trade union unity; it presented on opportunity of attracting the middle sections. Moreover, it should be emphasized in particular that both before and after the pact was concluded our Party did not for a moment forget that action is the chief meaning of the united front.

The activities of February 9, 1934, were organized at our initiative, and on February 10, 1935, our Party decided to call upon the proletariat

of Paris to honor the memory of those who fell on February 9, 1934. We passed this decision alone and proposed that the Socialist Party should take part in our demonstration.

We also took the initiative in arranging a demonstration on May 19, 1935, at the Wall of the Communards which, according to tradition, has always been organized by the Central Committee of the Communist Party. But the Seine Socialist Federation wanted to organize a counter-demonstration on the same day against the fascists, and proposed that we take part in it. We replied to them. "Here is our decision. If you agree, take part in the demonstrations at the Wall. You will be given a place in the ranks of those demonstrating; if you do not agree, we shall hold the demonstration without you." And the Socialist regional organization had to give up their plan and join in our procession. Under the leadership of the Communist Party, 200,000 passed by the Wall of the Communards.

Simultaneously with the organization of the political united front, we tried to develop trade union unity. The achievement of trade union unity should be the chief stage in the establishment of unity of the working class in France.

It was just thanks to the united front that we were able to make progress on the road to trade union unity, despite the strong resistance of the reformist Confederation of Labor and especially of some of the most reactionary of its leaders, affiliated to the Neo-Socialists.

There were 700 united trade unions formed. The unions of the railwaymen of all the railways except two united. Joint local unions and joint regional unions of the departments were formed.

The reformist Confederation of Labor was forced to renew negotiations with the representatives of the Unitary Confederation on the question of unity in the trade union movement.

In face of the crisis of the Second International, the loss of its influence and of its membership, extremely great responsibility rests with the Communist Party. Our task is not to allow the Socialist workers to become disillusioned, not to allow them to despair. It is now a question of leading the Socialist workers up to joint struggle against fascism, even if they are not yet fully in agreement with us, even if they still retain some prejudices against us, for in the joint struggle these prejudices will lessen and vanish.

According to Blum the Communists aim at making the united front inevitable, and in actual fact we have made it inevitable.

By signing the pact some of the leaders of the Socialist Party reckoned to restore their authority among their supporters and in their organizations which had been faced with the necessity of choosing between party discipline and the united front with the Communists.

The workers see that certain leaders of the Socialist Party are seeking every opportunity of multiplying the difficulties with a view to weakening the united front and even smashing it completely. Where the leaders of the Socialist Party resist the united front, a loss of influence among the Socialists can be observed.

Three examples may serve to illustrate this fact.

First example—our discussion on the question of the people's front.

The Socialist Party from the very beginning was hostile to our conception of the people's front. Actually it remained on the platform of parliamentary action and feared mostly the action of the masses. In order to distort the discussion, the Socialist Party declared that our program was too moderate; it declared that it was not enough to demand a tax on capital. It proposed the socialization of the banks and big industrial undertakings. It wanted to appear more Left than we. We calmly replied:

> "We, Communists, are in favor of socialization; we are in favor of expropriating the capitalist-exploiters without compensation; but we consider that one condition is necessary to put through socialization: to hold the reins of power, to seize power, and in order to seize power, there is only one method which has justified itself, the method of the Bolsheviks: the victorious uprising of the proletariats, the dictatorship of the proletariat, and Soviet government. (*Applause.*)
>
> "We, Communists, however, do not propose that you, Socialists, accept this basic program of the Communists. We propose that you conclude an agreement with us on the basis of what is possible in the present situation. You do just the same: do not demand from us that we accept your program. We can fight for direct demands; we can bring about a tax on capital. The country will the more readily understand this demand since it has already figured in the program of the Radical Party, and it is a measure partially adopted in other countries."

After a four-months' discussion in the pages of the *l'Humanité* through an exchange of documents, letters, and resolutions, which were published each time, it had to be recognized that the differences had not been removed. But we still continued to insist upon our point. And the Congress of the Socialist Party which met in Toulouse, under pressure of the municipal and canton election results, was compelled to pass a resolution in favor of the people's front.

A second example of how certain leaders of the Socialist Party tried to create difficulties for the united front. At the time of the foul murder of our Comrade Kirov, the proletariat of the Soviet Union and its Communist Party had recourse to the severe measures which proletarians in power should adopt against murderers and their accomplices.

The Bolsheviks have learned the lessons of previous revolutions. They know that the Versailles reactionaries rewarded the Paris Commune in 1871 for its clemency to them by the bestial murder of 35,000 Communards. The Bolsheviks showed the counter-revolutionaries the sword of proletariat justice, and these counter-revolutionaries found champions in some of the Social-Democratic Parties.

Leon Blum himself wrote a long, tearful article and later published the foul statements of Russian Mensheviks in his newspaper, *Le Populaire*. We condemned this position of the Mensheviks. We recalled Robespierre's historic phrase: "We are suspicious of sensitiveness which sheds tears only about insults against the enemies of the people." We declared ourselves for unconditional solidarity with revolutionary Bol-

shevik justice. We unmasked the Mensheviks and their friends before the people. And they remained silent.

The third example. After the Franco-Soviet agreement of mutual assistance had been signed, and especially after the publication of the communique concerning the meeting between Premier Laval and Comrade Stalin, there immediately followed a strong attack upon us not only from the reactionaries, but particularly from the Socialists. In this communique Comrade Stalin expressed complete understanding and approval of the policy of state defense pursued for the purpose of keeping their armed forces at a level corresponding to the requirements of safety in France. And this time also, Leon Blum began the attack. The Trotskyists, the Pupists, and Doriot also played their role here.

But the next day there took place a meeting of all the activists among the Paris Communists, at which the Political Bureau of our Central Committee made a declaration which amounted in essence to the following: (1) the peace policy of the Soviet Union corresponds to the historical directives of Lenin, firmly pursued by Stalin, and answers the interests of the international proletariat; (2) why and how there can be temporarily in the present situation, when fascism has come to power in Germany, coinciding interests between bourgeois France and the Soviet Union against Hitler and National Socialism—the chief inciters of war in Europe.

We added: we, the working class and its Communist Party, are determinedly continuing our struggle against the French bourgeoisie, against any policy of "national unity", against the possible use of the army against the working class, against the yoke of French imperialism on the colonial peoples. We in no measure are in agreement with the class policy of the French bourgeoisie. We continue to fight at the head of the working class against the enslavement of the people, against the return to the two-year term of military service. But we, the Communists of France, have not the same attitude to war as the bourgeoisie, reformist parties or the pacifists; we have a Marxist attitude to war, and we declare that in the event of an attack upon the Soviet Union we shall be able to muster our forces in defense of the Soviet Union by every possible means. (*Applause.*)

And so 5,000 Communists of the Paris region passed a resolution unanimously, with the exception of one vote, supporting the declaration. Then then set out for meetings and mass meetings organized by the Party in connection with the canton elections; they explained at these meetings the theses printed in posters pasted on the walls of Paris. In this poster we reproduced and explained to the broad masses the words spoken by the leader of the international proletariat, Comrade Stalin.

The proletariat and toilers of the Red suburbs and the whole people of France approved Comrade Stalin's statement.

The results of the canton elections which took place a week later are as follows: the Communist Party still further increased the number of votes cast in its favor at the recent municipal election, by obtaining 25 mandates out of 50 in the General Council of the Seine. (*Applause.*)

Before, we had only four seats. The proletariat and toilers of the

Red suburbs and the whole people of France, thanks to the work of the Communist Party, had complete confidence in Comrade Stalin, the tried leader of the international proletariat.

For a long time the Socialist leaders placed party unity before the united front. But our Party replied: "The united front prepares for a unity party". But when, thanks to our persistence and the support of the masses, unity of action began to be arranged and to increase, we ourselves put forward our conception of a united proletarian party.

In November of last year we made a proposal to the National Council of the Socialist Party: to convene a national conference on the question of a united party, and also to organize joint meetings between Communists and Socialists, in preparation for this conference, to discuss both the question of immediate united struggle and the question of a united party.

In May of this year we renewed this proposal in a document, which we called the "Charter of Unity of the Working Class".

In the introduction to the first part of this document we developed Stalin's thesis that "the idea of storming capitalism is maturing in the minds of the masses" .

The following principles served as the basis of our proposals: (a) Against class collaboration; (b) Against all "national" unity; (c) Convert the imperialist war into civil war; (d) Defense of the Soviet Union at all events and by all means; (e) Support of the colonial peoples; (f) Preparations for an armed uprising, dictatorship of the proletariat, Soviet Power as the form of workers' government; (g) Consistent internationalism; (h) Membership of the united world party of the working class; (i) Democratic centralism; (j) The cell in the factory to be the basis of the organization.

We added essential points of the program that the proletarian state will accomplish, the program of what it will give to different categories of toilers.

The C.C. of the Socialist Party has not yet given us a reply. The leadership of the Socialist Party has still given no reply, although the Central Committee of the Communist Party has asked it to express its opinion on the question of unity.

THROUGH VICTORY OVER FASCISM TO PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION

I now come to the conclusions. The united front brought many advantages to the working class; it has given it an opportunity of resisting the offensive of fascism and the offensive of capital successfully. The united front has brought over a section of the petty bourgeoisie to the working class. The argument of the Social-Democratic leaders that the united front will drive the middle strata away from them has been refuted by facts. The united front has strengthened our Communist Party. If it was not one of the narrow aims of the united front to strengthen the Communist Party it had to become, and indeed became, one of the consequences of the united front. The numerical composition of the Party has grown, as well as its influence, its authority and its role as a political factor.

Our cadres have also grown. Without doubt there were many diffi-

culties, much wavering and strivings. Not everything was well, not everything is well even now, but nevertheless, what enormous changes, what a growth in the consciousness of responsibility and initiative in our ranks!

Not only did we achieve success in the Party, but also in the Young Communist League. We confronted them with the task of winning over the youth, who must be dragged away from the influence of fascist demagogy, of using their thirst for action of achieving the creation of a youth organization which will not copy the organizational forms and slogans of the Communist Party. Our Young Communist League has increased its numerical composition five times: it took an active part in the Amsterdam-Pleyel movement, it grouped the organization of the republican, free-thinking, Socialist youth around the platform of the united front. Despite the stubborn resistance of the Socialist Party it concluded a pact on the united front with the Socialist youth.

The workers' sports movement has united, acquiring 10,000 new members. Now this movement numbers about 40,000 members.

The Republican Association of the War Veterans (A.R.A.C.) has grown. It was originally created by Henri Barbusse and at first had a few thousand members; today it has grown to 20,000. We have been successful in getting it to join the General Confederation of Ex-Servicemen, which has 2,500,000 members. (*Applause.*)

Our election tactics were calculated to defeat the candidates of fascism and reaction. In the first round we acted entirely independently. On the basis of the adoption of the pact for mutual support, the Socialists voted for the Communists, and the Communists for the Socialists, in the second round, with a few rare exceptions. At the municipal elections we used common lists in several cases. In accordance with our line of a people's front, we called upon our supporters to vote for the Radicals in Paris and the provinces, and put only the following questions to them: will you defend democratic liberties, will you demand disarmament and the disbanding of the fascist leagues? In Paris itself we put forward the slogan: all votes against Chiappe.

There were cases where we put forward lists together with the Radicals.

In Paris we withdrew our candidate who, among the anti-fascists, had obtained the majority of votes in the first round. Thanks to our votes, the Socialist Rivet was elected against one of the most prominent representatives of reaction.

It is clear that a policy of this kind increased the growth of our Party's prestige. All can see that it is not a shopkeeper's policy, not a petty policy, but a broad policy, a policy guided by the fact that having entered into battle, measures must be chosen which will ensure victory.

Comrades! We hope that our experiences can be used by the toilers of other countries. I appeal in particular to our brothers in Germany and to the German Socialist workers. I hope that the day is not far off when I can return, as on March 15, 1933, to the grave of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, defiled by Hitler's curs, and together with our Thaelmann celebrate the victory won, thanks to the unity of the working class. (*Applause.*)

We are happy, comrades, to greet the unity of action, partially realized by our brothers in Austria and Spain, unity born in joint battles. We are happy that our International is once more loudly and clearly declaring itself ready to enter into negotiations with the leadership of the Socialist International for the organization of the united front and for the preparations for complete unity of the international proletariat.

The position in France and throughout the world forces us to be more and more exacting with regard to our own work and our successes. In our movement and in our Party the defects are still too great, *viz.*, in the sphere of economic struggles and trade union work, work among the peasants, among women and in general in the sphere of organizational questions.

Finally, if certain successes in the organization of the Party and inner Party life have been achieved, these are not enough. Slackening of the rate of development, insufficient smoothness in the work of the Party at all its stages, can still be observed. Still greater efforts must be made to raise the ideological level of the Party.

In France we are approaching great battles. We have before us the prospect of huge class conflicts as pointed out by Comrade Pieck in his reply to the debate. Already at the present moment excitement is increasing in connection with the adoption of emergency decrees. The state employees—of whom Marx in the *Eighteenth Brumaire* speaks of as the backbone of the state—are rising, and they number 800,000. The petty bourgeoisie are losing confidence in the leadership of the big bourgeoisie. There are ever more frequent demonstrations, and they are multiplying and acquiring a more active, a more militant character. There is present a desire for the united front, for unity, and for the anti-fascist people's front. But the menace of fascism is also growing, the organizations of fascism, its militant detachments are strengthening. The bourgeoisie will strive to isolate our big Party in order to deliver a blow at it and break down the resistance of the toiling masses.

We bear a great responsibility before the working class of France, before the people of our country and before the international proletariat. We recognize this responsibility and the obligations we have to shoulder.

We must strengthen the united front on the political and still more on the economic field. We must achieve trade union unity, broaden and consolidate the anti-fascist people's front, to win over broad strata of the peasantry, and bring about the disbanding and disarming of fascist organizations which plot against the people and the republic and negotiate with Hitler against peace. We must fight against all forms of reaction, against the church, for a clean-up of the army, in defense of liberty, and in defense of the Soviet Union.

In order to fulfill these tasks we must strengthen our Communist Party, guided by Stalin's words: *"The victory of the revolution never comes by itself. It must be prepared for, and it must be won. And only a strong proletarian revolutionary Party can prepare for and win this victory."*

We have the will to fulfill these tasks. We have the will to justify the hopes which Lenin held out in connection with our working class and

the Communist Party when, in his letter to us in 1920, he proposed that we join the Third International.

We have the will to be worthy heirs of the revolutionary past of the French people, of the fighters of the glorious Commune, and worthy followers of the Bolshevik Party which is building the new socialist world.

We have the will to free our country from the disgrace and horrors of fascism, to release our brothers, groaning under the yoke of fascism, to fight with all our might for bread, for liberty, for peace and in defense of the Soviet Union.

We have the will to go further, to the victory of the Soviets, which we shall win under the banner of the Communist International, under the invincible banner of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

We know that the struggle will be severe, but we are confident of victory!

(Stormy and continuous applause, rising to an ovation. Standing, the delegates sing the "Internationale". The German delegation shouts aloud "Rot Front"!

The Canadian Communist Party in the Struggle for the United Front*

By S. A. CLARK

COMRADES, the Canadian delegation unanimously endorses and greets the report of Comrade Dimitroff and the Draft Resolution on the tasks of the Communist International in the fight for the unity of the working class against fascism.

The profound Marxist-Leninist analysis of the present situation and the tasks of our international Party given by Comrade Dimitroff will be a decisive guide for our Party in quickly achieving the united front of the masses in the face of growing fascism. It will be a powerful weapon for our Party in overcoming the narrowness and deep-rooted sectarianism that continue often to characterize our approach to the masses following social reformism and our approach to the still wider masses who are under the influence of the old capitalist parties or who are now falling under the influence of new capitalist demagogues of a fascist type. Following Comrade Dimitroff's advice, our Party must undertake an energetic struggle against sectarianism.

Flowing from the historic decisions of this Congress, a number of decisive steps must be taken by our Party for the rapid extension, consolidation, and raising of the level of the united front of the Communists and the masses following the labor-farmer party, the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation.

During the past year, the fight for the united front of the Communist and Socialist workers has attained a new level. The first organized forms of the direct united front between our Party and the Farmer-Labor Party were the local agreements between units of our Party and branches of the Farmer-Labor Party for the united struggle for the demands of the unemployed workers, and in some cases for the single demand of increased relief. In the tremendous upsurge of the strike and unemployed movement during the past year, the Communist and Socialist workers have developed the united front into the most powerful tendency of the whole Canadian labor movement. United front joint committees have been established between the provincial leading bodies of the Communist Party and the Farmer-Labor Party in the historic strike of the relief camp workers, in the campaign to organize a sympathy strike movement of the workers in Vancouver against the fascist terror bands of the Citizens' League of 10,000, in the Ontario hunger march, in the Corbin strike, in a united campaign in Quebec to rally the French-Canadian Catholics against the attacks of Hitler fascism upon their co-religionists in Germany, and in the May Day demonstrations which were the biggest in Canadian history. Side by side with these struggles, decisive steps are being taken for the unification of the trade union movement. In this growing united front movement, a wide separation is

* Speech delivered at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International.

arising between large sections of the members, followers, and many leading groups of the Farmer-Labor Party who are supporting the united front, and reactionary groupings of the leadership.

When necessary our Party has publicly criticized sectarian actions of Party representatives in the united front movement. At the same time our Party has not hesitated to expose those reactionaries who, for example, came into the joint committee of action of the Vancouver strike struggle with the aim of breaking it, and attempted at a strategic moment to join their voice with the reactionary fascist bands in calling for the arrest of strike leaders. These would-be wreckers of the united front suffered ignominious defeat at the hands of the workers and were compelled to return to a position of supporting the strike.

This development of the united front movement made it possible for our Party to put forward the proposal of the widest electoral united front in the general elections at present taking place in Canada. On the basis of a program against the capitalist offensive, for the economic needs of the masses, for peace and the defense of the democratic liberties of the common people, our Party is waging a determined fight for the united front of the Communist Party and the Farmer-Labor Party in the elections, fighting against the splitting of the anti-capitalist vote and for the election of the largest possible number of Communist and Farmer-Labor candidates pledged to the united front. In spite of the rejection of these proposals by the top leaders of the Farmer-Labor Party, important victories are being achieved in the fight for this united front. Agreements have been reached in several constituencies, and the French-Canadian section of the Farmer-Labor Party is taking the lead in openly proclaiming its united front with the Communist Party in the election campaign.

These successes have been achieved as a result of the fact that the Party has begun concretely to extend and develop the forms and methods of its struggle for the united front in accordance with the developing situation. Despite these successes our Party is lagging behind in taking advantage of all the possibilities for building the united front, and our work displays serious weaknesses and shortcoming which must be quickly overcome.

Comrade Dimitroff's report shows to the Canadian delegation that further and bolder steps must be taken in the fight for the united front. This means that our Party must take more decisive measures to strengthen the struggle for the unification of the Canadian trade union movement, which is divided into four principal sections—American Federation of Labor, Canadian unions, Catholic unions, and revolutionary unions. The revolutionary unions have issued a call and commenced active propaganda for unification of the trade unions into one all-inclusive trade union center. But this is insufficient. *A complete change must be brought about in the work of the Communists within the reformist and Catholic unions and in the relation between the revolutionary and the other unions.* This is the decisive, key question for the whole of our trade union work, and a basic prerequisite for the development of the united front of the workers and common people of Canada. In a number of industries, the revolutionary unions must propose and carry

through unification with existing reformist and Catholic unions on the basis of a policy of struggle for the workers' demands and trade union democracy. In a number of industries, the Communists in the reformist unions must undertake, with the support of the whole revolutionary movement and in unity with the revolutionary union movement, energetic campaigns to organize the unorganized workers into the reformist unions. An energetic struggle for the autonomy of the A. F. of L. unions in Canada must be commenced. Our work in the reformist and Catholic unions must be pursued under the main slogan: *To make these unions real weapons of struggle and unity of the Canadian workers.* The present beginnings of the committee movement for united action of the trade unions must be developed into a committee movement for the unity of the trade unions. Our Party must open all the doors to trade union unity. In this fight for trade union unity, we must unite the workers and progressive leaders of the Farmer-Labor Party with us in a common struggle. *These tasks are decisive for the whole struggle for the united front.*

The Party must break down the remaining barriers to the united front between the Communist revolutionary workers and the large masses following the Farmer-Labor Party. This means first of all that on the basis of the strengthened independent leading role of our Party in organizing the daily struggles of the workers, every measure must be taken to establish organized united fronts between all the lower organs of our Party and the Farmer-Labor Party, bringing about the most intimate daily cooperation between our members and the members of the Farmer-Labor Party. The system of local and provincial united front agreements must be quickly extended into a nation-wide network of an all-inclusive character. *To achieve this, the still strong remnants of the methods of abstract name-calling and doctrinaire exposure of the reformist leaders must be completely and once and for all done away with.*

On the basis of the united front in struggle, the Party must put forward slogans which will raise the united front, exerting the strongest pressure on the top reformist leaders, compelling them to accede to the united struggle on pain of complete isolation. In this, the Party must follow the good example of the struggle to compel the reformist leaders to introduce the Workers' Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill into parliament and to stop voting in support of the measures of the Bennett Government. This struggle rallied tremendous response among the workers in the Farmer-Labor Party. This tactic was carried out on the basis of the developing mass united front of struggle for genuine unemployment insurance and against the capitalist insurance scheme of the Bennett Government. At the same time we contrasted the genuine socialist aims of the Socialist workers with the pseudo-socialism of the Farmer-Labor Party leaders who declared that the reactionary measures of the Bennett Government represented "socialism". In this our Party made an important step towards a correct linking up of our basic exposure of the program and policy of the reformist leaders with the struggle for the united front.

What are the Canadian people to do *today* to stop the economic offensive of big capital and win a betterment in their conditions at the expense of the rich? What must be done to keep the Canadian people at

peace in a war-mad capitalist world? What must be done to preserve the remnants of democratic liberties? These questions stand with all sharpness before the Canadian people.

Entangled in the main imperialist contradiction—the Anglo-American antagonism—the Canadian imperialists are directly orientating on hurling the masses into another world war as a junior partner of Britain, with the aim of extricating itself from the crisis and reaping rich profits. That is why the Canadian bourgeoisie is actively participating in building the system of "imperial defense".

That is why the spokesmen of Canadian imperialism at the London Conference, at the Ottawa Conference, and at Geneva were the outspoken supporters of Japanese imperialism, the most frank opponents of all measures that would hinder Hitler's war policy, the most crude inciters to war against the Soviet Union. The Canadian bourgeoisie openly commits the Canadian people to participation in and support of British war policy, and is making extensive preparations for war. This war policy, and the desire of the reactionary ruling bourgeoisie to forcibly solve its market difficulties, to place the growing burdens of the continued agrarian crisis on the backs of the masses, their desire to solve the railway problem by amalgamating the two railway systems in the interests of monopoly capital at the expense of the workers and Canadian masses, to crush the rising strike wave for higher wages—this explains the marked, growing fascist tendencies of the Canadian bourgeoisie.

The growth of fascism in Canada is revealed in the ruthless, suppressive measures of the Bennett Government, the banning of the Communist Party and now the attempted banning of trade unions and unemployed organizations, the assumption by the government of powers to declare organizations illegal without the formality of a trial, the ruthless police terror and mass arrests, totalling more than 400 in the past month. The governments are centralizing and militarizing the police. The federal and provincial government powers have been given unlimited extent by acts of parliament. The franchise has been sharply curtailed by the great reduction in the size of provincial and municipal elective bodies and the disfranchisement of the relief camp workers and other sections of the population. Municipal rights are being curtailed and in many cases completely annulled, particularly where municipalities under Communist leadership or under the pressure of the masses take measures in the interests of the workers. At the same time, the bourgeois party system is disintegrating and alongside of a network of open fascist organizations such as the Citizens' League, the Fascist Union, the National Party, etc., new mass bourgeois parties of an incipient fascist type are being created by the bourgeoisie, such as the Social Credit Party and the Reconstruction Party. The predominant propaganda of the bourgeoisie has become the propaganda for stronger and more centralized state power, for the abolition of Party politics, for so-called business administration, and so-called "National" instead of "Party" government.

To frustrate the war alliance of the Canadian and British bourgeoisie, one of the main props of British war policy, and to save Canada from being hurled into war by the imperialist ruling groups, to defend the last remnants of democratic liberties and to fight to make the ruling

bourgeoisie relieve the masses of the enormous burdens of the crisis, our Party must call for the establishment of the widest united front of the common people, consolidated in organized and lasting form.

In order to achieve the all-inclusive united front of the common people our Party must open every avenue to such unity. It is from this standpoint that we must discuss the affiliation of the Communist Party with the Farmer-Labor Party.

Can the Farmer-Labor Party, with the affiliation of the Communist Party, become a vehicle for the broadest alliance of the workers, farmers, and middle class people in the struggle for peace, for economic betterment and to avert fascism? We believe so.

In rejecting the united front proposals of our Party, the top leaders of the Farmer-Labor Party have demagogically declared that the Farmer-Labor Party in itself represents the united front. This is not true. The united front is to be seen in the thousands of strikes and mass struggles against hunger and reaction. This talk of some of the Farmer-Labor leaders is an endeavor to bolster up their class collaboration policy. But the workers and farmers and large numbers of leading elements in the Farmer-Labor Party have to an ever-increasing extent recognized in practice that *the united front must be achieved in joint struggle with the Communist Party* and have built up this united front into a powerful movement. The rapid growth of the united front now sharply places the question: how to build a lasting united front of the revolutionary movement with the masses of workers, farmers, middle class people and the youth who have broken with the old parties and are now following the Farmer-Labor Party.

It is *precisely* this growing united front in struggle that makes it possible for our Party to propose that the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, with the affiliation of the Communist Party, shall become the means of a lasting wide united front of the common people. As against the policy of some reactionary officials of narrowing down the Farmer-Labor Party, we must propose the widening out of this organization into a *broad coalition party*. In taking such a step our Party must make it clear to the masses that our intention is not to transform the Farmer-Labor Party into a Communist Party. Our aim is to open wide new avenues for the united front of the common people in struggle against hunger, fascism and war and it is on the basis of such a program of struggle that we propose to enter the Farmer-Labor Party. Our aim is to unite into one coalition party all the trade unions, the farmer organizations, the middle class and professional people and the youth and women to wage an effective unified struggle for the economic and political interests of the masses.

This step will stimulate tremendous new strength in the united front of the masses in struggle. It will be a powerful blow against the reactionaries who continue to oppose the united front and to reject the line of effective struggle against the offensive of capital, fascism and war. At the same time it will demand from our Party *ten times greater independent* initiative in organizing and leading the struggles of the workers, any weakening of which will be fatal for the whole future battle against reaction.

To answer the question of what must be done now to save Canada from fascism and war, our Party must give its clear and unequivocal position on *the issue of government.* Fighting for the united front of the Farmer-Labor Party and the Communist Party in the present general elections on the basis of a program of united struggle against capitalist reaction, we have commenced to expose to the masses the inevitable disaster which would flow from the policy of passive waiting advocated by the reactionary groups of the Farmer-Labor Party who wish to hold the masses back from united struggle by spreading the illusion of socialism through a Farmer-Labor majority in Parliament in the next elections five years hence.

But today the splits in the old capitalist parties and the rapid breakaway of the masses from them, the formation of new capitalist parties of an incipient fascist type and the compromised position of the Liberal Party (which has been the Parliamentary opposition party during the past five years), raise concretely the question of what must be done to gain the greatest advantages for the masses in developing the struggle against hunger, war and fascism and to obstruct the reactionary fascist and war plans of the bourgeoisie.

In this situation *we must extend our tactics of the electoral united front.* We must call upon the masses of Canadian workers, farmers and middle class people to defeat the candidates of the government, the Liberal and the Stevens parties and to elect *a majority of Farmer-Labor and Communist candidates,* pledged to the united front of struggle to preserve peace, to save Canada from fascism, and to win immediate economic betterment for the masses. In view of the desire of wide masses for a Farmer-Labor government, we declare that if such a majority is elected, then, in order to strengthen the struggle against poverty, war and fascism, the Communist members of Parliament will support a Farmer-Labor government, *provided* it carries into effect the measures of the united front program—genuine unemployment insurance, unequivocal break with the war program of so-called "imperial defense", the repeal of Section 98, the measures to increase wages and shorten hours, to sharply reduce the taxation of the masses and increase the taxation of capital and the rich. The Party must explain to the masses in the clearest manner that this *is only possible* on the basis of the widest, genuine united front in the struggles and in the elections. We must explain to the masses that they will be able to make use of such a government to strengthen the fight against capital and reaction *only by defeating the class collaboration policies and theories of the Farmer-Labor leaders,* by the most determined class unity in struggle. We must explain to the masses that such a government *would not introduce socialism.* We must explain to the widest masses of people that the struggle for the united front program involving the great masses of the people is the only road of advance.

Such a genuine revolutionary mass policy of our Party will make it possible for the broad masses, who have broken with the old capitalist parties and have come under the influence of the Farmer-Labor Party, to find the road to the line of united struggle. Such a policy has for its unconditional prerequisite the tremendous strengthening of the inde-

pendent leading role of our Party in organizing and leading the daily struggles of the masses, guarding against Right opportunist deviations which would feed the reformist illusions of the masses.

The correct carrying through of these policies will enable our Party to wage an effective battle against the incipient fascist parties in Canada, which are rapidly gaining very wide influence among the masses of farmers, middle class people, the youth, and even among the workers. The Social Credit Party, headed by the demagogue Aberhart, conceals the most reactionary program of big capital behind the promise to bring prosperity to the masses by issuing social credit dividends. The new Reconstruction Party, headed by Stevens, a leading conservative politician who seceded from the Bennett Government, promises to "reconstruct the capitalist system" for the benefit of the masses. Behind a facade of promises and social demagogy, Stevens finances fascist terrorist bands, praises Hitler and expresses open admiration for Mussolini's corporate state. These new incipient fascist parties have succeeded in winning large sections of the farmers, town middle class people and workers under their influence.

What hindered our Party up to now in waging a truly effective struggle against these new capitalist demagogues, a struggle which is of decisive importance for the whole future of the fight to defeat fascism?

Our agitation and propaganda against these incipient fascist parties is too often characterized by *a mere labelling of them as fascist*, as if it were self-evident to the masses that these parties are becoming fascist parties. Such a mistake at the present stage when these parties do not display *all the characteristics of fascist parties*, but mainly devote themselves to the most extreme social demagogy, is extremely dangerous, because it leaves out of account the strong anti-capitalist sentiments of the masses following these demagogues and establishes a barrier between us and them, which only makes it easier for the fascists to spread the ideology of fascism among them. This sectarianism is of the greatest danger in the face of growing fascism.

It is decisive for the struggle against fascism in Canada that a turn be made in the work of our Party among the masses of farmers. The sectarianism of our work among the farmers is expressed in the fact that up until now our Party has not put forward the burning economic demands of the small and middle farmers and waged a real fight for these demands. The slogans which we put forward among the farmers are often such as to be looked upon by the farmers as impossible, such as for example, the demand for the general cancellation of debts. Up to now, our Party has only weakly commenced to put forward the really burning demands of the farmers such as moratorium on debts, higher prices, lower freight rates, drought relief and to build wide united front movements for these demands. Our fight to win the masses of small and middle farmers is hampered by the fact that the revolutionary elements among the farmers are isolated in the Farmers Unity League rather than being in the large mass organizations of the farmers.

A deep-seated sectarian attitude prevails in our Party in respect to the storekeepers, the teachers and professional people, who are the first to fall under the influence of the new capitalist demagogues. In order to

fight effectively against the growing menace of fascism a decisive change must be brought about in this respect and the Party must commence to lead active work in defense of the economic interests of the widest stratum of the lower middle class people in the towns.

The beginnings have been made in overcoming the sectarian features of our work among the youth, to whom the incipient fascist demagogues try especially to appeal. The recent Youth Congress, which brought together the representatives of 160,000 young people of church, sports, and other youth organizations, must be utilized as the beginning of a genuine mass movement of Canadian youth in the fight for the economic, cultural and social needs of the youth and against reaction and war. Sectarian elements, who would like our Young Communist League to begin to fight with this movement because of the religious youth organizations insisting on embodying some religious phrases in its documents, must be decisively combatted, and our Y.C.L. precisely orientated on the problems of how to work and fight together with even the most backward organizations of Canadian young workers. This mass youth movement must be intimately connected with the organization and leadership of mass fights against the social destruction of the youth such as the present strike and hunger march struggles of thousands of youth of the militarized labor camps. It is in this great struggle, which is the central political issue at this moment in Canada, that our Party and League are for the first time coming forward as the leader of the youth and rallying the support of hundreds of thousands for the demands of the youth.

In the fight against these new capitalist demagogues our Party must put forward a program representing the interests of the widest masses of Canadian people as the basis for the development of the united front of the common people. Such a program must be as the resolution says: "a program of demands that are calculated to really shift the burden of the consequences of the crisis to the shoulders of the ruling class". The sectarianism which limits our demands to resistance to capitalist attacks and feeds passivity by spreading the idea that no effective struggle can be waged to force the bourgeoisie to relieve the masses of the burdens of the crisis must be done away with. Only when our Party puts forward and organizes the widest masses for the struggle for such a program of demands as will throw the burden of the crisis onto the bourgeoisie will we be able effectively to expose the incipient fascist parties and their demagogues. Only such a struggle will enable us to head the growing anti-capitalist sentiments of the masses, who are breaking with the old parties. This was shown clearly by the example of the fight against the large semi-fascist organizations among the French-Canadian masses, when, by organizing the fight for such a program of demands, our Party took over the leadership of the convention of these organizations, and exposed the fascist demagogues.

Utilizing social demagogy, bourgeois reaction in Canada is attempting to direct the discontent of the masses into the channels of active mass hostility to Communism and the revolutionary working class movement under the slogan of "defending democracy against the anti-democratic forces of Communism". The outlawing of our Party by the government and the courts was carried out behind a demagogic campaign under the

slogan of "maintaining British free speech against the forces hostile to British democracy". The extraordinary powers of the Iron Heel Bennett Government were assumed in the name of "peace, order and good government". The fascist bands in British Columbia are carrying on a terror campaign against the revolutionary workers under the slogan: "There is enough rope and ammunition to defend democracy against Communism." The bourgeoisie is utilizing its immense propaganda forces in this way to try to turn the bourgeois democratic illusions of the overwhelming masses of Canadian workers, farmers, and middle class people into the channels of fascism.

One of the most important lessons of our past work for the future struggle against fascism is to be found in the campaign for the legality of the Party and the repeal of Section 98 under which the Party was declared illegal. Some comrades at that time opposed the raising of the concrete demands for the repeal of Section 98 and the legality of the Party, on the grounds that such demands would foster illusions in bourgeois "democracy". But, it was only when our Party came forward as the leader of the whole fight against reaction, for the preservation of the democratic rights of the workers, and actively struggled for the restoration of the democratic rights, such as the right to hold meetings, which were being annulled by the government and the bourgeoisie, that we finally succeeded in exposing the tactic of the government of carrying through suppressive measures in the name of "democracy". The widest united front movement of the people, including large sections of the liberal middle class people, rallied in support of these demands raised by our Party and forced the issue of Section 98 to the fore as the central political issue of the country, compelling the government to release the imprisoned Communist leaders two years before their terms expired.

This example shows to our Party the tremendous potential powers of the anti-fascist struggle of the masses, if given correct leadership and guidance by the Party. These tremendous forces were further shown when our Party took up a genuine struggle against the annulment of municipal powers in the city of Windsor and on the basis of the united front secured the elections of the Communist alderman together with the re-election of the Labor Party mayor and city council majority, in spite of the concentrated campaign of the government and bourgeoisie. A strong sectarian resistance still continues in our Party to raising in sharp form the slogans for the maintenance of the democratic liberties which the bourgeoisie is seeking to annul and for the restoration of the elementary democratic rights which have recently been suppressed. It is this sectarianism which is hindering our struggle against reaction in Quebec, where our press is outlawed and our meetings and leaflets are subject to prohibition by the police. In order to meet the present new wave of terror and suppression, aimed at illegalizing the revolutionary unions, our Party must come forward more daringly and boldly than ever before as the organizer and leader of the widest united struggle in defense of the democratic liberties of the people.

The Party must wage a struggle against the sectarianism which counterposes the struggle for the maintenance of the democratic liberties to the struggle for the proletarian revolution and Soviet Power.

Since the origin of our Party, our propaganda for the proletarian revolution and Soviet Power has been of the most sectarian character. We have not soberly taken into account the deep-seated bourgeois democratic illusions of the overwhelming majority, not only of the Canadian farmers and middle class people, but of the Canadian workers. In our struggle today to defeat fascism and the war plans of the Canadian bourgeoisie we cannot overlook the fact that capitalist propaganda during the past fifteen years has planted a completely distorted idea of Communism and Soviet Power in the minds of great masses, the idea that Soviet Power means the abolition of "democracy".

Never before was it so urgent that our Party unfold a truly mass campaign to explain and clarify to the masses our program of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. We must carry out Lenin's instruction to translate these Latin words into English. The old sectarianism persists today in the character of our agitation for the slogan of Soviet Canada. This slogan is thrown out by our propagandists and agitators, as if the masses understood without any further explanation what it means and what it signifies. Such sectarianism is dangerously playing into the hands of the reactionary bourgeoisie who declare that this slogan signifies the desire of the Communists to "subject the Canadian people to the rule of a foreign power". A complete change must be brought about in this respect in order effectively to lead the fight against fascism.

Our Party will be able to mobilize the great masses in the fight against fascism, if we will correctly link up the most stubborn united struggle for the defense of the democratic liberties of the masses with the widest explanation and clarification to the masses of our slogan of a workers' and farmers' government, showing concretely that this is the way out of capitalist hunger, repression and war and that such a government will be a million times more democratic, as Lenin said, than the most democratic bourgeois republic. Our Party must expose the efforts of the bourgeoisie to confuse the masses with their slogans against "all foreign political tendencies", "against both fascist and proletarian dictatorships", etc., with the aid of which they insidiously turn the democratic illusions of the masses into the channels of fascism. Our Party must make full political use of the historic contrast between the fascization of bourgeois democracy and the rapid extension of proletarian democracy in the Soviet Union, based on the great new socialist life and work of the Soviet masses. This will enable us to expose the bourgeois demagogues who try to show a contradiction between our fight for free speech and our struggle for the proletarian dictatorship. Organizing the masses for the most tenacious struggle in defense of the last remnants of bourgeois democracy, against fascism and war, we must win them for the struggle for a million times more democracy and for socialism under a workers' and farmers' government. (*Applause.*)

The New Stage of Soviet Trade

By V. NODEL

THE decisions of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. and of the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. regarding "the reduction of the prices of bread, and abolition of card ration system for meat, fish, sugar, fats and potatoes" dated September 25, and "on the work of consumers' cooperative societies in the villages" dated September 29, are vivid proof of the fact that the main difficulties in the sphere of food supplies have been finally overcome in the U.S.S.R. These decisions prove that the U.S.S.R. is *becoming a country of abundance,* at an unheard of pace, a country able to produce and already producing enormous quantities of goods at really cheap prices.

THE CAUSE OF THE FORMER SYSTEM OF RATIONED SUPPLIES

During the eighteen years of the existence of Soviet Power, it has been necessary on two occasions to resort to the system of rationed supplies, namely, during the period of War Communism (1918-20) and during the period of the decisive transition from the restoration to the reconstruction of the entire national economy (1928-34), during the First and at the beginning of the Second Five-Year Plan. These were two different historic stages. In each of these, the system of rationed supplies helped to solve the particular problems characteristic precisely of the given stage.

During the period of War Communism, when the country represented a besieged fortress, the card (ration) system helped to organize a correct utilization of the limited resources available, helped to secure victory in the Civil War, and to preserve the main cadres of the proletariat.

During the period of the transition from the restoration to the reconstruction of the national economy, when the capitalist classes offered up fierce resistance on the grain front (the "grain strike" of the kulaks in the villages, and the speculation in the towns, etc.), a different problem had to be solved, namely, to utilize the resources in such a way as to secure the speediest fulfilment of the plans of production. This problem could only be solved by means of preferentially supplying the most important regions of the country and the workers of the enterprises of decisive importance. This was actually done in 1930. Thus, while the percentage of workers among the entire population of Moscow was 34 per cent, these workers received 47 per cent of the total amount of bread, 56 per cent of barley, 56 per cent of the macaroni, and 55 per cent of the herring on sale. In the first quarter of 1931, the number of the workers in the most important enterprises amounted to 38.9 per cent of the total number of workers supplied, while these groups received 67.5 per cent of the products; in the second quarter, the figures were 39.6 and 73.2 respectively, and in the third quarter—42.7 per cent and 79.3 per cent.

It was only due to the system of rationed supplies "that the state was able, though having limited resources, to fully ensure that the most important centers and shock-workers in production were preferentially supplied, while at the same time ensuring bread supplies at fixed state prices to those delivering to the state agricultural raw materials, such as cotton, hemp, jute, tobacco, etc., in the interests of raising the yield of industrial crops and of the growth of purchases of raw materials for industry." (From the Resolution of the Plenum of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U., November 25-28, 1934.)

The system of rationed supply fully justified itself in its time. However, the Party has never concealed that this system by comparison with wide Soviet trade has a number of *negative* features. These negative features consisted in the bureaucratic spirit in the methods of work of the trading organizations, in negligence towards the individual requirements of consumers, the high cost of upkeep of trading apparatus, and in the struggle for the production of new articles of mass consumption, etc.

That is why the Party has repeatedly stressed the exceptional importance of the development of trade turnover, and of the passage from rationed supplies to a wide Soviet trade.

The Seventeenth Party Conference (January-February, 1932), already pointed out that

> ". . . it is only on the basis of developing trade turnover that it is possible to ensure further speedy improvement in supplying workers and the toilers of the village with industrial goods and agricultural products, for which, in its turn, it is necessary to develop in every way a network of shops, stores and of an entire trading network, with the introductions of its necessary technical reconstruction. Only on this basis is it possible to prepare the abolition of rationed sale of goods and to replace the system of centralized distribution, by wide Soviet trade."

THE ABOLITION OF THE CARD (RATION) SYSTEM AND THE TRANSFER TO WIDE SOVIET TRADE

For the card system to be given up, it was necessary, first of all, to establish a stable base in agriculture, to ensure a steady growth of the quantity of agricultural products. It was also necessary to prepare the trading apparatus for wide Soviet trade.

At the Seventeenth Congress of the Party, when analyzing the data of the growth of agriculture, Comrade Stalin pointed out that

> *". . . 1933 is the first year after the completion of the reorganizational period,* is the turning year *in the development of the cereals and industrial crops.*
>
> "This means, *that the cereals in the first place, and then the industrial crops will from now on proceed strong and confidently towards a powerful rise."*

This powerful rise revealed itself already in 1934. In spite of the unfavorable climatic conditions, the Soviet Union succeeded in storing

250,000,000 poods of grain more than during the preceding year. This growth of state reserves and the simultaneous growth of the reserves in the hands of the population rendered possible the abolition of ration cards as regards bread products. Comrade Molotov, speaking at the November Plenum of the Central Committee of C.P.S.U., 1934, said the following regarding the abolition of ration cards:

> "The replacement of the ration card system by trade is one of the best proofs of the growth of the strength of the Soviet Union, a proof of the sharp change in agriculture, a proof of the new successes of socialism in our country. *We have become stronger and therefore we are abolishing the card system.*"

Simultaneously with the creation of a stable base for supplying the cities with bread, extensive work was begun on the development of a network of shops and stores, and on the improvement of the organization of trade itself. In the last two years only, the trading network has grown almost 50 per cent. During 1934, 4,526 new well-equipped model shops were opened. State trade by July 1, 1935, possessed over 28,000 shops as against 9,145 on January 1, 1932. A network of large model department stores were opened (the central department store in Moscow gives an idea of the turnover of these shops—for the past month its daily turnover reaches two million rubles). Thus in 1935 we already had a stable supply base and a considerably better working staff.

The flunkeys of fascism attempted to present the abolition of cards as "a new defeat" of the Soviet government. The *Times* wrote that "the system of distribution has failed and is now being abolished" (November 27, 1934). The *Berliner Beorzen Zeitung* asserted that "by means of the abolition of ration cards the Soviet Union desires to mislead the foreign countries regarding economic successes, primarily in the field of agriculture" (December, 1934). The *Illustrirovanny Kurrier Zodzenny* tries to save its face by assuring its readers that "the Soviet regime is inexorably returning to those methods of government that it had itself called capitalist" and that all this "is a proof of complete bankruptcy of Marxist teachings". (December 8, 1934.)

It is doubtful whether any of these papers would like to repeat what they wrote less than a year ago. The practice of this year has shown that the abolition of the card system means a *further* strengthening of the entire national economy and an improvement of the conditions of the toilers. The Party began the abolition of the card system with the abolition of bread cards so as later to abolish the ration cards for the remaining products, and to pass to Soviet trade.

THE GROWTH OF STATE PURCHASES AND TURNOVER, AND THE REDUCTION IN PRICES

Bread cards were abolished on January 1, 1935. Only ten months elapsed. If we are to measure this period by the usual scale, this period is extremely short. But for the Land of the Soviets this was a period of new tremendous advance, and the basis consolidating the collective farm system, and basing itself on the victories of 1934, the

Party set the following task before agriculture—to achieve 16.3 per cent increase in production during 1935.

The data concerning harvesting, and the fulfilment of all agricultural work, enable us to assert that this plan will be over-fulfilled. Thus, for the first time in the history of humanity agriculture, based on the construction of collective and state farms, provides an increase this year in excess of that attained by the product of industry (16 per cent).

The growth of agriculture has been primarily reflected in the growth of state reserves of products, in the growth of collective farm trading. The state supply of milk for seven months of this year increased by 14 per cent as compared with the same period last year, butter by 17 per cent, and fish by 21 per cent, while additional supplies in the hands of cooperative stores and workers' factory supply stores increased for the first half of the year by 38 per cent. The funds of retail trade have grown considerably, while the turnover of collective farm trading increased. This growth of resources created all the necessary conditions for the *final* abolition of rationing and for the transfer to wide Soviet trade with all food products. The decision of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. and the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R., dated September 25, declares that:

> "The significance of this figure may be judged by the following data. The average annual increase in agricultural production in the U.S.A., the country where capitalist agriculture is most highly mechanized, amounted to 3.1 per cent in the first decade of the twentieth century, and 1.4 per cent in the second decade, while for the period of 1925-29 it amounted to 1.7 per cent. Thus, the increase of agricultural production in the U.S.S.R. for one year is more than ten times the average annual increase of agricultural products in the U.S.A.
>
> "The improvement of cattle-breeding, the growth of the yield of sugar beet croop, the consolidation and development of the fishing industry, have now created all the necessary conditions for the liquidation of the card system also for meat, fats, fish, sugar, potatoes. The liquidation of the card system for meat, fats, fish, sugar and potatoes should eliminate the existence of double prices—the high commercial prices [for goods sold in open shops.—*Ed.*], and the too low rationed prices—and ensure the establishment of state selling prices uniform for each on the level province (republic), between the existing commercial and rationed prices."

The transfer to uniform prices for meat, fats, fish, potatoes and sugar is realized by prices which are *considerably lower* by comparison with the existing prices in the "open" (non-ration) trade. Thus, for instance, the price for meat is being cut by 24 per cent, for refined sugar, 35 per cent, and potatoes, 15 per cent. For the overwhelming majority of the city population this is a *direct* increase in their real wages, because only a part of the city workers received rationed* supplies.

* At prices lower than those in the "open" shops.

The decrease in prices for bread in January of this year was followed by a sharp decrease in prices at the collective farm markets.* The reduction in the prices of bread resulted in the reduction of the prices of all other products. The prices for some 30 various articles have been decreased by the Soviet government during a period of six months, amounting to a total of 600,000,000 rubles (not taking into account the cut in the price of bread, on January 1, 1935). In comparison with the first half of 1933, the prices in "open", "commercial" shops on September 1, 1935, have been cut by almost a half, by 45 per cent. The greatest decrease in prices had been effected for the following goods: bread, buns, potatoes, cotton (from 60 to 70 per cent); butter, barley, milk, kitchen soap, sausages (from 40 to 50 per cent).

The reduction in prices effected by the government, the development of state and cooperative trade, the growth of the quantity of products on the collective farm village available for the market, could not fail to affect the prices current in collective farm trading. For the first half of 1935, the prices of collective farm products sold in the open market have fallen by 21 per cent. This means, that if the same rate of price reductions continue in the second half of the year (and the rate of price reduction will undoubtedly be greater), the city population will save on purchases at collective farm markets alone, from three to three and a half thousand million rubles. In capitalist countries a fall in prices leads to impoverishment and destruction of peasant farming. In the Soviet Union the decrease in prices is a stimulus towards the further development of agriculture. This lowering of prices goes parallel with the general increase of the income of collective farmers. In confirmation to this it will be sufficient to cite two facts:

1. In the last five years, the state had doubled the amount of products purchased from collective farms and from collective farmers—individually. Expenses of production have sharply decreased as a result of the mechanization of the processes of labor. The state itself has invested thousands of millions of rubles in technically equipping agriculture, has established an enormous network of machine-tractor stations, and placed hundreds of thousands of tractors and tens of thousands of harvesting combines and automobiles at the disposal of those engaged in agriculture. At the same time the state has left unchanged the prices it pays for those products compulsorily sold to the state by the collective farms. For a number of agricultural products (industrial crops, dairy products, etc.), the state has even increased the prices it pays (for the last five years the collective farms and farmers have doubled their incomes on that part only of their products, which they sell to the state at stable prices).

2. The collective farmers sell about 20 per cent of their surplus products through the collective farm markets. The market prices have been reduced thrice in the course of two years. The following are the figures of the incomes of the collective farmers obtained from the collective farm markets: in 1933 the turnover of collective farm trading amounted to 10,000 million rubles; in 1934, 14,000 million rubles; in 1935,

* When the collective farmers bring their surplus products for public sale.

16,000 million rubles, taking the average of the first nine months of each year.

There is no doubt that the new lowering of prices will in a still greater measure result in the reduction of collective farm prices. Now already by the middle of the Second Five-Year Plan, the decrease of prices, planned for the end of this plan, has in fact been already secured on the collective farm markets. It is therefore quite clear that the second half of the Second Five-Year Plan, when there will be a still further increase in the country's resources, will be a period which will see a particularly considerable decrease in prices, a period when the material well-being of the toilers will rise to an unheard-of degree. Every toiler in the Soviet Union and outside it can now see that the U.S.S.R. is really becoming the richest country, a country where there is an abundance of products, a country where products are cheapest.

The quantity of products in the country is increasing. The possibility of producing them is growing. The satisfaction of the demands of the population depends decisively on the work of the trading apparatus. At the Seventeenth Party Congress Comrade Stalin gave special attention to the question of the development of commodity circulation, as a most important national economic task "which if not solved, will make further progress impossible". He said that:

> "In order that the economic life of the country might bubble like a spring and that industry and agriculture might have a stimulus to increase output still more, one condition is necessary, and that is, to expand *commodity circulation* between town and country, between the districts and the regions of the country, between the various branches of national economy. The country must be covered with a huge network of goods bases, shops and stores. There must be a ceaseless flow of goods through the conduits of these bases, shops and stores from the producers to the consumers."

Soviet trade, well and culturally organized, helps in better organizing production, and ensures the correct utilization of goods products, and their correct distribution over the various regions of the country.

THE STRENGTHENING OF THE CONSUMERS' COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES IN THE VILLAGES

The demands of the village population have grown enormously, but there is clearly insufficient improvement in the way their trading requirements are met.

The Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. and the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. in their decision on "the work of consumers' cooperative societies in the village" point to the following serious defects in the work of cooperative societies in the village:

> "The work of consumers' cooperative societies in the village suffers from serious defects. The system of village consumers' societies and village stores has been unnecessarily split up into too small units. Industrial commodities reaching the village, such as clothing, shoes, cloth, etc., are distributed among small

unsuitable stores, which cannot have the necessary assortment of goods for the consumers' selection."

It is necessary quickly to raise trade in the village to correspond with the new tasks. It is necessary to make considerable improvements in supplying the village with industrial products. At the same time it is necessary to intensify purchases in the village. How is this to be done?

The decision of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. and Council of People's Commissars gives a detailed answer to this question. This answer amounts, in the first place, to sharply strengthening and consolidating the village consumers' societies themselves, secondly, concentrating the entire activity of the consumers' cooperative societies on work in the villages, and liberating the consumers' cooperative societies from the task of serving the city population.

The consolidation of village consumers' societies is to be brought about by the following measures: small consumers' societies are being united, huge sums of money are been appropriated for the construction of 5,000 new shops and the strengthening of the District Societies (155,000,000 rubles), 5,000 trucks for carrying goods are being provided, the wages of the staffs of the consumers' societies are being increased, the work of the district cooperative unions is being strengthened, and a base is being established for work to be carried on on business-accounting lines.

At the same time the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. and the Council of People's Commissars have taken steps to secure that all distortions of democracy in the cooperative societies are decisively done away with. Their decision states that "all basic questions of the work of village consumers' societies (plans of trade and purchases, estimates of expenditure and profits, measures to ensure work without any losses on the part of the village consumers' societies, reports of administration and control and auditing commissions of their work, and so on); must be discussed at a general meeting of shareholders or at a meeting of representatives, called at least once a quarter". (From the decision of the C.C. and C.P.C.) The consumers' cooperative societies must carefully attend to the needs of their shareholders. The activities of the cooperative societies must be under the constant control of the masses.

WHY THE PARTY DECIDED TO WIND UP THE WORK OF THE COOPERATIVES IN THE CITIES

This decision is not a sudden one. It has been prepared by the entire previous work done to develop trade, and reflects the tremendous successes of the entire national economy. As far back as May, 1931, the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U., the Council of People's Commissars and Centrosoyuz in their declaration regarding the consumers' cooperative pointed out that it was inexpedient to retain the monopolistic position of the consumers' cooperatives. This declaration laid it down that it was *obligatory* for state trade to participate in serving the city population. All the following plenums of the Central Committee empha-

sized the necessity for extending the participation of various kinds of state trading in the organization of the commodity circulation of the country and primarily of the towns.

As a result of these measures, state trading has occupied a *leading* place in the towns. At present 62.3 per cent of all the goods, realized in the cities, are sold through the network of state trading stores belonging to the People's Commissariat of Home Trade, and the People's Commissariat of the Food Industry (as well as branches of workers' factory supply stores, etc.). The consumers' cooperative stores sell only about one-third of all goods. Thus, in 1935, we have a situation the opposite to that which we had in 1930-31, when the consumers' cooperative stores were almost monopolist in the sale of goods in the towns.

It is not only the relations between the individual trade systems which have changed. *The position of the trading enterprise has also changed.* The existence of the cooperative societies in the towns is expedient and justified as long as cooperatives can present *definite advantages* to their shareholders in comparison with other citizens. These advantages were very considerable during the Nep period, when the struggle against private traders was carried on. The advantages remained in another form during the period of the First Five-Year Plan. While trade continued in "closed" stores, when the cooperatives had at their disposal a large network of suburban farms and extensive products and when there was a shortage of a number of products in the country—they could sell their shareholders an additional quantity of products at cheap prices.

The position naturally changes, when there is a large amount of products in the country, when dual prices are liquidated (the low price in the closed trade and the higher one in the open commercial store) and when trade is entirely carried on at *stable prices.* The cooperative societies cannot present any special advantages to their shareholders. The most important stimulus for cooperation falls away.

From this fundamental fact arises the necessity of doing away with the *separate* existence of the cooperative societies and the advisability of completing the processes taking place in city trade. The necessity of just such a solution of the question also follows from the fact that the consumers' cooperative societies must concentrate *all* their attention on work in the village, "where it must serve as the basic transmitter of industrial goods and the most important link in the organization of commodity circulation between the town and country".

The consumers' cooperative societies have played no small part in organizing and developing trade in the towns. Those engaged in the work of the cooperative societies have done not a little to develop a network of shops, to root out the private trader, and to accumulate experience in carrying on trade in a cultured fashion. The time has now come when the staff itself is in a position to organize trade through its own apparatus. The handing over of the cooperative stores to the state trading institutions will still further improve the trading service of the town population, and at the same time will ensure a new and great advance of trade in the village.

* * *

The turnover of Soviet trade in 1935 equals 80,000 million rubles (not counting the commodity circulation of collective farm trading which equals 16,000 million rubles). 20,000 million rubles' worth of goods more than were sold last year are being sold to the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union this year, by state trading stores and consumers' cooperative societies. This is in the U.S.S.R. In the capitalist countries the trade turnover is steadily decreasing. During the four years of the crisis the trade turnover in Germany decreased by 40 per cent, in the U.S.A. by 47.7 per cent. This decline took place in a situation where prices increased uninterruptedly. Even according to fascist statistical data (*Wirtschaft und Statistik* of September 1, 1935), the minimum living wage, leaving out rents, in Germany, grew during the last two years by 6.9 per cent. The cost of articles of consumption grew still more by 8.6 per cent. According to the same data the cost of eggs during the past year rose by 19.2 per cent, meat by 8.5 per cent, veal by 16.2 per cent. In Berlin, from April, 1933, to June, 1935, the price for butter increased by 36.9 per cent, meat by 15.3 per cent, peas by 90.7 per cent, potatoes by 43.3 per cent. Difficulties as regards food supplies, and the high cost of articles of consumption are a widely-spread phenomenon in fascist Germany. A considerable increase in prices is to be observed in the U.S.A. The National City Bank in its July report states that "since the time of the lowest point of the crisis up to April, 1935, retail prices for products increased by 38.5 per cent". As a result of this the consumption of the main food products is growing daily.

In the Soviet Union, the goods turnover is growing daily, and the life of the toilers is becoming ever-more prosperous. Prices for goods are decreasing. The toilers of the U.S.S.R. have approved the abolition of food (ration) cards and the decrease in prices for foodstuffs with great enthusiasm; their hearts are filled with pride and joy at the growth and property of their socialist fatherland. Here is what Comrade Yermilova, a woman worker employed in the Sickle and Hammer Works (Moscow), writes in connection with the abolition of food cards:

> "My wages amount from 120 to 130 rubles per month. And I, as a worker with low wages, am all the more glad to hear of the new decision of the Party and government, as just read to me. I have not yet calculated what economy the lowering of prices will give me. But I can already see that this economy will enable me to purchase additional kilograms of butter, meat and other products every month. We will live, and we shall see the day when there will be a still greater decrease in the prices of foodstuffs. Foodstuffs and other products will be the cheapest in the world in our country."

An old weaver, Maria Feodorovna Mokhova (Ivanov) has reckoned her saving as a result of the reduction in prices as follows:

> "On bread I will save 18 rubles, on butter 12 rubles, and on meat 4.40 rubles. Now, I will certainly get a new coat and shoes for my daughter for the October holidays." (*Pravda*, September, 9, 1935.)

By abolishing the ration cards, by reducing prices, and by reconstructing trading, the Party and the Soviet government are giving striking examples of the way they care for people, for their well-being, and for the steady growth of the standard of living of the masses. This is another illustration to the splendid words of Stalin at the graduation of the students from the Red Army Academy:

> "Of all the valuable capital the world possesses, the most valuable and most decisive is people."

These people are developed in the Soviet Union, care is taken of them, their standard of living is raised, and they are ensured a happy and joyful life in the Land of Socialism.

The abolition of food cards and the reduction in the prices of bread and many other products, and the decision of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. on the work of consumers' cooperatives in the village—all this creates exceptionally favorable conditions for Soviet trade to flourish and for the well-being of the toilers of the Soviet Union to rise to an unprecedented degree.

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